

December 1944

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SUMERS' RESEARCH

Bulletin



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CONSUMERS' RESEARCH

BULLETIN

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December 1944

Off the Editor's Chest

THERE has been a tendency in recent years to utter the term "big business" in a tone of voice that suggests that large scale enterprise is objectionable to all right-thinking people. As a rule, big business is particularly vulnerable to attack because bigness is associated in the public mind with abuse of power. (Unfortunately, those who have made use of this association of ideas to attack industry never mention that *big government* and big labor organizations have all the disadvantages, from the public's standpoint, of big business.)

Big business has defenders of its own, and plenty of them, so that little space need be taken here to mention the benefits which large enterprises honestly and competently conducted *can* have for consumers.

An automotive journal some months ago pointed out that the British, who have derived a large measure of their wartime strength, particularly in the field of motor vehicles, from America's mass-production techniques and facilities, are re-examining the practices of their own automobile industry to discover just what the differences are that can be eliminated, so that they may be able to compete for export business. The magazine quoted an editorial from the Manchester Guardian which observed that an automobile steering wheel and starter each cost a British manufacturer about 80% more than his American competitor, a distributor 60% more, a crankshaft 125% more, and malleable iron castings and steel body sheets 100% more than the same parts made in an American factory. The British manufacturer's handicap was epitomized

by the Manchester Guardian in these words: "66-2/3 percent (by cost) of the materials, raw and semi-fabricated, purchased by British motor vehicle manufacturers is controlled by rings, combines, and cartels."

The practical performance of the American mass-production factory system will have securely established itself in the esteem of members of the Armed Forces, for they will have had unparalleled opportunities to compare their own equipment with that made in other lands. On their return to civilian life, men whose lives have been saved by the availability of planes and tanks in incredible numbers and with unmatched quality and versatility of equipment will be slow to give credence to those who talk against big business as though it were something we must root out of our national economy. It is not the size of a corporation, but the performance of its products, its corporate efficiency as reflected in low costs and good servicing, its advertising policies in specific cases, that should determine the consumer's evaluation of big business performance and his good will toward that method of production and distribution.

The performance of the various makes and models of watches, sewing machines, vacuum cleaners, washing machines, mechanical refrigerators, and automobiles that CR has rated in the past is summarized in the new *Annual Cumulative Bulletin*. It is such items that will, for the most part, be in greatest demand for a year or two after the new production of civilian goods begins. On the whole,
(Continued on page 14)

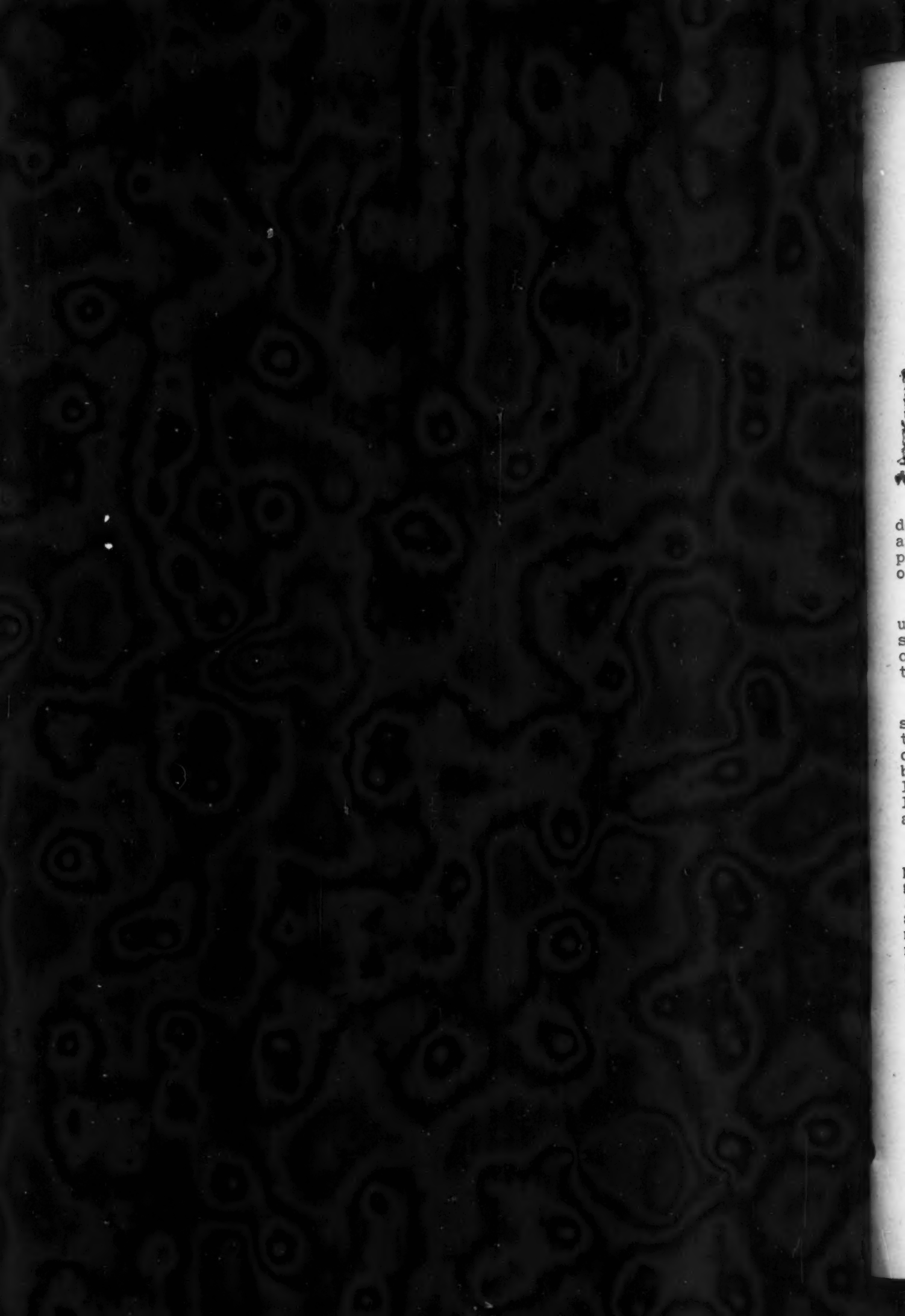
Scientific and Technical Experts and Editors: F. J. Schlink, R. Joyce, M. C. Phillips, A. R. Greenleaf, and Charles L. Bernier. **Editorial Assistant:** Mary F. Roberts.

Symbols used to indicate sources of data and bases of ratings: A—recommended on basis of quality; AA—regarded as worthy of highest recommendation; B—intermediate with respect to quality; C—not recommended on basis of quality; cr—information from Consumers' Research's own tests or investigations; 1, 2, 3—relative prices, 1 being low, 3 high. Note that price and quality are completely differentiated in CR's listings; a quality judgment is independent of price; 43, 44—year in which test was made or information obtained or organized by the staff of Consumers' Research.

It will be advantageous if you will, whenever possible, send prompt notice of change of address at least a month before it is to take effect, accompanying your notice with statement of your old address with name in full. At least three weeks' notice must be given in any case. This rule, however, regarding long advance notice does not apply to military personnel. Changes of address for men and women in the services will gladly be handled whenever required.

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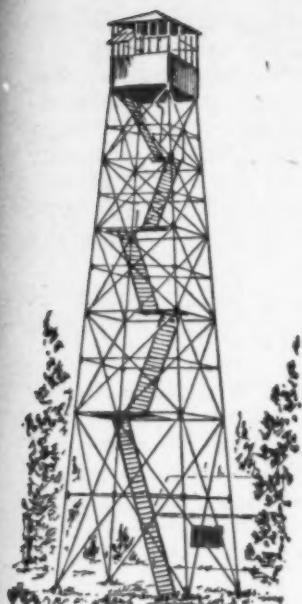


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The Consumers' Observation Post

THE ELECTROLUX CORPORATION has been the first manufacturer to receive permission from the War Production Board to manufacture a limited number of vacuum cleaners. The company was foresighted enough to get the WPB's permission about two years ago to produce a three-year inventory of parts, reports a business journal. This supply can now be drawn on for assembling new cleaners. The price of the cleaner will remain at the pre-war figure of \$69.75. In 1942 CR listed as A. Recommended two models of this make, one selling for \$49.50 and one at \$69.75.

* * *

FAT PEOPLE often get that way from worry—which sounds like a paradox, indeed. This is how it works, according to Dr. E. L. Tuohy, of Duluth. Fatigue and anxiety are closely related. Since fatigue is usually alleviated by food, people with conflicts or emotional problems often tend to eat too much and too often, with the customary results.

* * *

LAUNDRY BAR SOAP is likely to be available in limited supply for civilian use this winter because the Army has tripled its requirements for this type of soap. One business paper estimates that Army needs will have the effect of cutting civilian supplies in half. Soap flakes and powders are also likely not to be too plentiful.

* * *

HOME CANNING OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES has become so popular that certain sections of the food industry are wondering whether such activities will continue on the same scale in peacetime, and how it will affect the business of commercial canners. According to a public opinion survey, well over three billion quarts of food were canned at home in 1943, and plans and programs for 1944 called for further expansion of these activities. The use of frozen food lockers is expected to cut down the amount of home canning done in rural areas as soon as freezer facilities are available in post-war years.

* * *

BRUSHED RAYON FABRICS are so flammable that authorities in Canada are reported to be considering taking some action against their use. The particular garments involved are cotton-backed brushed rayon sweaters which have caught fire in some unexplained fashion while being worn. In one or two cases the sweaters are described as bursting into flames when their wearers struck matches to light cigarettes. This is a recurrence of a very old hazard, for many years ago, deaths from a similar cause were very common in England where small children clad in cotton flannel (flannelette) nightgowns, who stopped for a moment in front of an open grate fire, were burned to death when the fuzzy surface of the garments was ignited either by radiant heat or by a spark, and then burned with startling suddenness.

* * *

CHILDREN'S SHOES are a constant headache to parents and shoe merchants alike. The amount of wear that a child gets from the wartime product is estimated at half that of pre-war shoes. During the past dry summer children could save wear on their leather shoes by wearing fabric-topped unrationed play shoes, but this type is not sufficiently weather-resistant for the winter months. Some retailers predict a serious shortage of children's shoes during the December through March period unless WPB, OPA, and WMC do something practical about the labor and material shortages.

A NEW AUTOMOBILE is what most people want to buy first as soon as restrictions on production of consumer goods are lifted and automobiles are made again. Cars come before furniture, radio sets, new homes, refrigerators, and washing machines, according to a magazine survey. Of present car owners queried, 32 percent will buy new cars as soon as they are available even if they are modified 1942 models; 52 percent will wait for new models. While economy was ranked first as the feature most desired in the new cars by 33 percent of the owners of cars less than five years old, 21 percent voted for ease of operation, and 16 percent for riding comfort as features in which they were most interested.

* * *

SULFONAMIDES are effective drugs when administered under the guidance of skilled physicians. They decidedly must not be used indiscriminately for self-medication, for they have been responsible for many untoward effects. The Food and Drug Administration is permitting the over-the-counter sale of gauze bandages and nose drops containing small amounts of sulfonamides where the label bears adequate direction for use and appropriate warning. In view of the fact that knowledge of their ill-effects is still limited, it is open to question whether even such limited use should be permitted. One drug trade journal, for example, reports a number of cases of facial dermatitis in one of the Army hospitals which were traced to the use of a brushless shaving cream containing sulfathiazole, included in the formula no doubt with the idea of preventing infections from cuts in shaving.

* * *

CANDY MAKERS are going into the cookie business in order to keep their names before the public during a period of wartime shortage of materials. So much candy is going to the Army and Navy, particularly the five-cent bar types and hard candy, that often a well-known brand all but disappears from the civilian market. Penny candies are out for the duration, according to the Wall Street Journal. Christmas stocks may be delayed in arriving on dealers' shelves, on account of late deliveries of sugar to manufacturing establishments.

* * *

HANGING NEWLY WASHED CLOTHES on the line in cold weather is quite a chore, particularly when the wet laundry freezes to the line and the clothespins. The difficulty can be eliminated by following advice from the North Dakota Agricultural College to boil both the clothesline and the pins in salt water for about half an hour. Of course, it is best for the clothes not to hang them out of doors at all in freezing weather, as handling fabrics when they are frozen tends to weaken or break the yarns.

* * *

ARSENIC AND LEAD were found to be present in appreciable amounts in the tobacco of cigars and cigarettes in a chemical study made for CR some years ago. Chewing tobacco is also a hazard for it may contain arsenic and lead in sufficient quantity to cause actual inflammation of the mouth and throat of the user, according to the New Hampshire Health News. Since tobacco is not classed as a food or drug, it does not come under the jurisdiction of legislation and regulations that set a limit (though not, in our opinion, a sufficiently low one) to the amount of lead and arsenic tolerated in food and in medicinal substances.

* * *

THE BUTCHER'S PAL TENDERIZER is a gadget listed at \$13 in a supply house circular with the claim that it will make cheap meat taste better. According to the description, it is devised to permit the butcher to sew scraps of meat together into "ideal steaks" instead of grinding them up into hamburger which sells for a lower price. Just what is used for thread was not mentioned. Perhaps the theory is that what with beef being so tough these days the meat-hungry consumers will think a piece of twine is just another one of those fibers or a bit of connective tissue in a chunk of "utility" meat.

* * *

BEFORE THE DAYS WHEN rubber hot-water bottles were plentiful and cheap, it was the family custom in some sections to set a pan of common table salt in the oven to heat and then pour the hot salt into a flannelette bag. This was applied to cold feet or an aching back. Now the wheel of progress has made a

(The continuation of this section is on page 29)

Men's and Women's Wallets

Practical, Useful, Christmas Gifts

ALTHOUGH the problems of a wartime economy have made substitutions necessary in the manufacture of a great many things, all of the higher-priced wallets for both men and women are still being made of leather of some sort. Ten-cent stores or "variety chain" stores are selling imitation leather wallets (which wear very badly) in their cheapest grades and leather wallets of poor quality in their more expensive grades. Prices of wallets are far above the prices charged for goods of similar quality in pre-war days, and the average quality tends to be pretty low unless one is prepared to spend from \$3 up. Since billfolds and pocket wallets are much used and highly prized by both men and women, however, the problem of a Christmas gift can often be satisfactorily solved by the selection of a billfold for pocket or handbag, of good quality and construction.

Leathers

One of the most popular, and at the same time one of the more expensive leathers used in making wallets is goatskin. **Goatskin** has a fine, firm grain, does not scuff easily, and has very good wearing qualities. There are, however, at least 68 varieties of goat-skins; that fact, of course, implies wide variations in character and quality. Fine skins have the typical groups of three pores very close together, and the pores are small. The small size of the hides and frequent imperfections of the skins call for great care in the selection of this leather by the manufacturer, and the buyer, too, should be watchful for scars and marks that may spoil the appearance of an article. (Dressings and finishes may make such defects fairly inconspicuous when the article is new, whereas they may be

very noticeable or even unsightly after a period of wear.)

Genuine Morocco is a vegetable-tanned goatskin in which the fine grain has been brought out by "boarding" (folding the leather over, with grain side in and creasing the fold by passing a board back and forth over it under pressure). It has a characteristic squeak, a result of the original vegetable-tanning, which finishing processes never quite remove. The application of the word morocco to any but goatskin is incorrect, but nevertheless, the name has been so commonly used that it would be risky to assume that any given leather is morocco unless it is identified by the word "genuine" used with the word "morocco." Imitation moroccos are made from sheep; correct labeling for those would be: "morocco-grained sheepskin."

Sheepskin, because of its stretchiness and the ease with which it is scuffed, is not a good leather for wallets, although there is no objection to its use for inner parts which receive little wear or strain. It is often embossed to simulate more expensive leathers.

Calfskin is one of the most versatile of leathers and is much used for small leather goods. The skins are fine-grained and supple and can be used either with their natural smooth surface or in "grained" patterns. Calfskin also takes tooling marks and patterns very well and can be finished with a good high-gloss surface.

Genuine Alligator is the chief luxury leather used for wallets; it is more expensive than goatskin. It is strong and durable and its natural markings are attractive. The thinness of alligator hides is advantageous, as wallets made of this leather have less "bulge" or bulk than many others.

Cordovan leather, as the term

is now used, is made from the "shell" of horse butts—a small area of less than six square feet which lies between the grain and the flesh of the butt. It is distinguished by its long-wearing qualities and its resistance to abrasion. It is very close-grained leather, less porous than other kinds, and takes a brilliant polish.

It is always a necessary safeguard in buying any leather article other than shoes to examine the labels carefully for the designation of the animal that produced the hide. The mere labeling that something is made of genuine leather is of no more use than a statement on furniture would be that it is made of genuine wood. In one wallet tested by Consumers' Research some years ago, only a small part of one sample, in addition to the particular piece that was labeled "Genuine Leather," was actually leather. Split leather is genuine leather with the grained surface split off for other use, but it is very poor in quality, soon loses its original appearance, and often gives very poor service to the consumer who buys it in a brief case, handbag, or other article that receives hard use.

Construction

The best construction for any billfold or wallet is one in which the fewest number of pieces folded and stitched the least possible number of times are used. It is particularly desirable to avoid extra layers and folds of leather, and envelopes and pockets that are not needed. Anyone looking over a sizable stock of wallets will find this distinction easy to note, and will observe that those of simpler construction and fewer details tend to be of better finish and workmanship, and fold up with a minimum of bulk. A long compartment for paper money,

two or three small ones for stamps, cards, etc., and perhaps one transparent envelope for carrying identification card or automobile license will usually satisfy the average man's requirements. (Particularly for men, thin, flat wallets are most comfortable to carry and will tend to keep their appearance better than wallets that are "fat" and bulky.)

Good construction calls for a minimum of stitching which, so far as possible, should be on inner surfaces where it will not be sub-

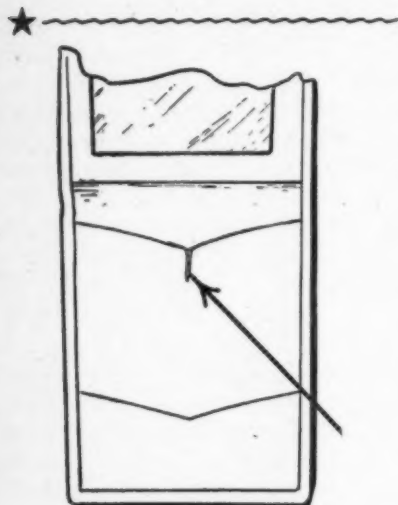


Figure 1

Avoid pockets which have sharp dips or V's, else a tear may occur, as shown by the arrow.

★
jected to the severe wear affecting outside surfaces. Some wallets are now being made with "stitchless" construction. These have the pieces of leather cut so the various sections fold into one another and are self-locking. The one stitchless wallet examined in this test, however, was judged to be poorly constructed.

Stitching should be fine and well finished. Glued parts should be firmly fastened so they will not pull out or turn up. Avoid wallets in which spot-gluing is used.

Wallet edges may be merely cut and polished or they may be turned and glued or stitched, or both. All of these edges may be satisfac-

tory if properly done, but in use stitching at a fold may be expected to give shorter than normal life, by fraying or wearing out. It is best to avoid pockets which have sharp dips or V's (see Figure 1).

A pocket with a flap having a hard snap button is of doubtful value, although this construction is rather common in women's wallets. (The region around the button will be subjected to unusual wear, and the snap may pull out.) The snap may not be too important from the bulk standpoint in a wallet meant to be carried by a woman, but two wallets included in this test showed undesirable marking on the outside of the wallet over the button after only a moderate amount of handling.

Many persons find double currency compartments (which use a divider for separation of large and small bills) of value. So-called "secret currency pockets," which use a concealing flap to cover bills of larger denominations, are desirable for concealing sums of money from prying eyes. Such flaps, however, are somewhat difficult to use since they will not always fold flat and may cause a bulge or wrinkle. A design using a double divider (really a long envelope with one side open) is much more satisfactory.

Transparent windows may last well enough (although they may become scratched, lose their transparency, or discolor in time), but it is well to look particularly to the security of their fastenings. The best types are firmly secured at the flap or hinge by gluing and reinforced by a stitched and glued leather backing. For many persons, however, well-made transparent envelopes designed to be slipped into a wallet pocket are perhaps to be preferred to the "windows." Removable identification windows for license cards are a good idea because they permit a single paper or card to be shown without need to risk the whole contents of a wallet into the hands of a perhaps unknown or unau-

thenticated person. Swing windows for cards should be securely fastened, and the opening should be at the inside edge.

CR's Tests

Twenty-four wallets, and one billfold designed to be used in a man's coat pocket, were included in the present test made by Consumers' Research. (Subscribers who are in a position to shop in New York City may be interested to learn that at the time the wallets selected for this test were purchased the Savoy Luggage Shop, 60 E. 59 St., was found to have a rather large and unusually varied stock of wallets at relatively low prices.)

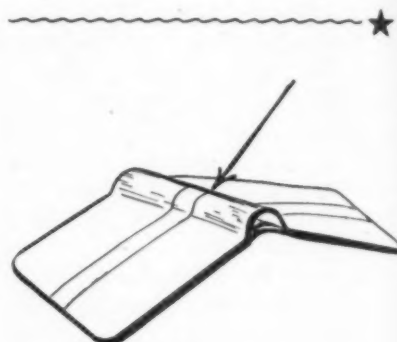


Figure 2

This "hump" at the fold of the wallet is not a defect but a sign of good design and careful manufacture. The extra length of material at this point permits the wallet to be folded flat without strain on the leather or stitches in the region of the fold.

★
The prices of the wallets included in this test ranged from \$1.20 to \$5. Merely for comparison's sake, an unused pre-war wallet sold at \$1 was included in the examination. This wallet would have been rated *A. Recommended* in this test, a fact which illustrates the abnormally high price of well-constructed leather goods today.

In addition to examination of the leather and the construction of the wallet, and an abrasion test of the leather, an opinion-judgment was made of the appearance, based not on a personal preference

for the leather used but on the attractiveness of the wallet as an example of its type. (For example, a wallet was not penalized for being imitation alligator, but was judged as an alligator-grained calf wallet.) Consideration was given in the rating of men's wallets to the factors of weight and bulk (the thinnest and the lightest being judged preferable).

The women's wallets tested were on the whole inferior in quality to men's wallets; note that they have been rated relative to each other, and not on the same quality scale as the men's wallets. Women who are unable to buy *Peter Bain*, No. 127 (which was on a par with the best of the men's wallets) and who find the appearance of men's wallets satisfactory for their purposes will be well advised to buy an *A. Recommended* man's wallet of suitable size. Four of the women's wallets have been rated *B. Intermediate*; all of these were inferior quality, compared to the *A*-rated *Peter Bain* wallet.

With a few exceptions, the wallets were considered to have arrangements of compartments and identification windows or card holders that would be satisfactory for the general user. Where workmanship, appearance, and details of finish were good or normal, for the type, comments on these have been omitted to save space.

Men's Wallets

A. Recommended

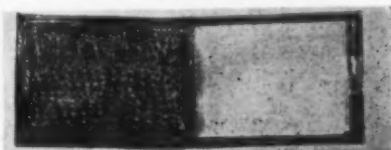
A Genuine Alligator Wallet (Made in Argentina; purchased at Savoy Luggage Shop, 60 E. 59 St., New York 22, New York) \$3.58, including tax. Brown alligator skin with inside parts and lining made of sheep-



skin. All turned edges were firmly secured by stitching and gluing. The stitching was fine and well finished. Resistance to abrasion, very

good, one of the two best in this test. Leather of inside pocket found very weak. **2**

Halvorfold, 8-pass Jr. Size, No. 125 (Halvorsen, 605 W. Wash. Blvd., Chicago 6) \$3.50, including tax. Brown alligator-grained calfskin. Stitching, fine and well finished, and



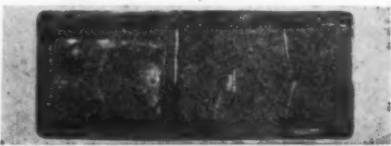
all edges firmly glued and sewed. Considered third best men's wallet in test if calfskin embossed and grained, in imitation of alligator is not considered objectionable. **2**

Rumpp (C. F. Rumpp & Sons, Fifth and Cherry Sts., Philadelphia 6) \$3,



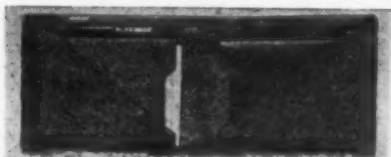
including tax. Black goatskin. Stitching, fine and well finished; gluing, fair. **2**

Viking (Made in England; purchased at Savoy Luggage Shop, 60 E. 59 St., New York 22, New York) \$3.58, including tax. Black goatskin with



a morocco grain. Stitching, fine and well finished; gluing, good. Considered second best men's wallet in the test and close to *Peter Bain*. **2**

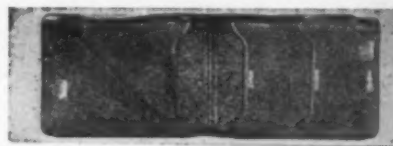
Pearse (Pearse Leather Products Co., Blubber Hollow, Salem, Mass.) \$4.74, including tax. Black goatskin with a morocco grain and a sheepskin removable envelope-divider. Stitching, fine and well fin-



ished; gluing, good. Merits an *A*

rating only if removable envelope-divider (secret compartment) is disregarded. This was made of very poor grade (exceedingly weak) sheepskin split, and showed early signs of wear, particularly at the fold. **3**

Peter Bain, No. 233 (The Suntorbach Co., Adrian, Mich.) \$5, including tax. Dark brown lizard-grained cordovan leather on the outside and sheepskin with a morocco grain on



the inside. Stitching, coarse but not too well finished. Resistance to abrasion, very good. Considered the best men's wallet in the test, for hard service. **3**

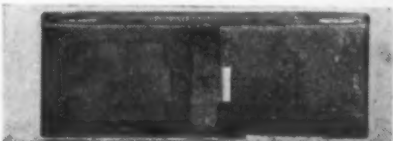
Rumpp (C. F. Rumpp & Sons) \$4.20, including tax. Brown goatskin coat-pocket billfold. A memo pad, to be inserted in the right-hand side, was



provided. Stitching, fine and neatly finished. An inner fabric lining was used at the bill pocket compartment (leather lining more desirable). **3**

B. Intermediate

Amity, Director Junior, Cat. No. 736 (Amity Leather Products Co., West Bend, Wis.) \$3, including tax. Black



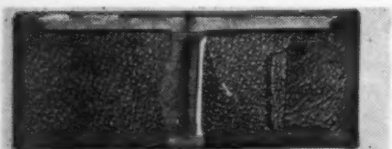
goatskin with a morocco grain. Stitching, fine and well finished; gluing, good. Workmanship and quality of leather, fair. **2**

Balfour, No. 654-44 (L. G. Balfour Co., Attleboro, Mass.) \$3.30, including tax. Light tan sheepskin.



Stitching, fine and well finished; gluing, good. Resistance to abrasion, poor. **2**

Buxton (Buxton, Inc., Springfield, Mass.) \$3.60, including tax. Brown goatskin with sheepskin dividers. The wallet was assembled by an arrangement of flaps and folds. Side flaps folded around and inserted into the larger card pocket slits, forming



the smaller pockets; flaps held in place by gluing to a cardboard backing on the underside. Carelessness in gluing flaps had resulted in two weakly constructed pockets. Construction and details, poor. Resistance to abrasion, fair. **2**

Swank, Style TH 134 (Swank Products, Inc.) \$3.50, including tax. Brown goatskin with a morocco grain and with the inside lining made of sheepskin, on which had been superimposed at the fold a layer of goat-



skin which showed splitting tendencies. Stitching, fine but not too well finished; gluing, good. Workmanship, construction, appearance, and resistance to abrasion, all fair. **2**

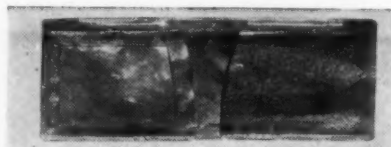
Prince Gardner (Prince Gardner, St. Louis) \$4.20, including tax. Brown, goatskin with a sheepskin lining. Bill compartment closed by a zipper. Stitching (not visible from outside) was fine and well finished. The pockets of the wallet were made by



folds and flaps, and also by stitching. The flaps were firmly glued on the underside to a thin leather backing. Resistance to abrasion, poor. Appearance, fair. Was the thickest of the men's wallets. **3**

C. Not Recommended

Jay-Dee (Jay-Dee Leather Products Co., Redwood City, Calif.) \$2.40, including tax. Dark brown goatskin with a morocco grain and a sheep-

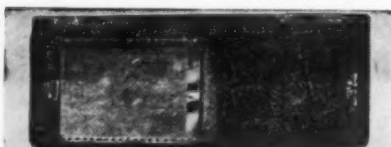


skin divider. Stitching, fine and well finished; gluing, fair. Workmanship, quality of leather, and appearance, fair. Construction, poor. **1**
Montgomery Ward's Cat. No. 60-7721E. \$1.89, including tax. Black sheepskin with a morocco grain. Stitching, which varied from coarse



to fine, was not too well finished; gluing, good. Resistance to abrasion, poor. Appearance, fair. Judged to be the best of the C-rated wallets, price considered. **1**

Swank (Swank Products, Inc., Attleboro, Mass.) \$1.20, including tax. Black sheepskin. Swing card holders, poorly constructed. The divider



was too short. Stitching, coarse, not well finished; gluing, poor. Workmanship and quality of leather, construction, appearance, and resistance to abrasion, all poor. **1**

Swank, Style 58 (Swank Products, Inc.) \$1.80, including tax. Black sheepskin. Swing card holders, poorly constructed. Stitching, irregular, varying from coarse to fine, and not well finished; gluing, poor. Workmanship and quality of leather, con-

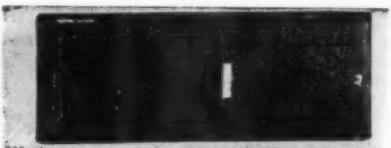


struction, and appearance, poor. **1**
Swank, Style 140 (Swank Products, Inc.) \$1.80, including tax. Brown sheepskin. Stitching, irregular and uneven; its color did not match the



leather. Gluing, fair. Workmanship and quality of leather, construction, and appearance, fair. Resistance to abrasion, poor. **1**

Rolfs, Director Jr. (Rolfs, Inc., West Bend, Wis.) \$3, including tax. Black sheepskin with a morocco grain. Stitching varied from fine to coarse



and was fairly well finished; gluing, poor. Construction, fair. Resistance to abrasion, poor. Same design (but different leather) as *Amity*, Director Jr. **2**

Jay-Dee (Jay-Dee Leather Products Co.) \$3.90, including tax. Saddle colored sheepskin. Stitching varied from coarse to fine, but was well

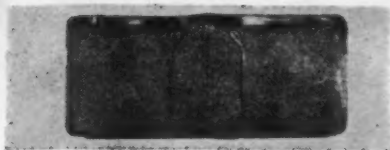


finished; gluing, good. Resistance to abrasion, fair. Light color showed dirt easily and might be objectionable to some users. Appearance, poor, and showed early effects of handling. **3**

Women's Wallets

A. Recommended

Peter Bain, No. 127 (The Suntorbach Co., Adrian, Mich.) \$3, including



tax. Black cordovan leather on the outside and sheepskin with a morocco grain on the inside. Resistance to abrasion, very good, one of the two best. The best women's wallet in the test and considered the equal of men's wallet, *Peter Bain*, No. 233. **2**

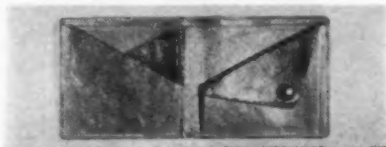
B. Intermediate

Lady Buxton (Buxton, Inc., Springfield, Mass.) \$2.40, including tax. Black and red sheepskin with a



morocco grain. Edges of one of the dividers reinforced with leather striping at the fold. Stitching, fine and well finished; gluing, good. Resistance to abrasion, poor. Appearance, fair. **1**

Balfour, No. 581-44 (L. G. Balfour Co., Attleboro, Mass.) \$3, including tax. Saddle-colored and light



brown sheepskin. Well glued, stitching fine and neatly finished. Resistance to abrasion, poor. Appearance, fair. **2**

Princess Gardner (Prince Gardner, 2027 S. Vandevanter, St. Louis 10) \$3, including tax. Red sheepskin with a morocco grain. The two double-faced swing card holders were



open at both ends (undesirable). Stitching, not too well finished; gluing, poor. Resistance to abrasion, poor. Appearance, fair. **2**

Princess Gardner, Registrar (Prince Gardner; Montgomery Ward's Cat. No. 60—7890E) \$3, including tax. Black and red sheepskin with a



morocco grain. The two swing card holders were open at both ends (undesirable). Resistance to abrasion, poor. Appearance, fair. **2**

Outdoor Storage of Farm Machinery

CITY folk have often been heard to comment upon the careless treatment of farm machinery by farmers who, it is asserted, do not properly protect their equipment from rust and deterioration by keeping it under cover. Unfortunately the situation is not so simple, for it takes more than a roof to keep farm machinery from being damaged by climatic conditions.

All unpainted metal surfaces should be coated with heavy oil, and there should be a thick coating of grease (or preferably one of the rust-proofing compounds available for this particular purpose, e.g., *Texaco Rust Proofing Compound*) wherever that is practicable;

wooden parts should be kept well painted. Where these precautions have been taken, the advantages of indoor over outdoor storage are not particularly great. (Often, when indoor storage is used, these precautions are not taken and the machinery may suffer as badly, or nearly as badly as though it had been stored out of doors.) If the implement stands on the ground, simply under the roof of a shed, damage by rust will not be much diminished. (A shed with a tight roof is of some help, if available, particularly if the implement is set up on blocks so as to be out of direct contact with the damp ground.)

If the implement is tightly and properly housed so that

rusting would be effectively prevented, the cost of providing the shelter comes to about as much as the cost of the damage that would be done if the equipment were allowed to stand out in the weather. Unfortunately, farmers are in no position now to purchase lumber, and may not be for some months after the close of the war in Europe. (Indeed, to get lumber in even very limited amounts, they must often drive a truck a long distance and what they will bring back will usually of necessity be second-hand lumber from a dismantled building or house.)

Thus, until the present lumber supply situation eases considerably, the best practice for farmers will be to keep all working parts of things that must be stored out of doors well oiled, and other metal parts well coated with grease or a special rust-proofing compound. Parts not so treated should be kept well painted.

Fountain Pens



FOR the last year or two, fountain pens have been a rather striking example of an article on which demand is very brisk and the supply exceedingly skimpy. With the increased amount of letter writing, and the natural desire to purchase a compact gift of a much wanted kind which is capable of being easily sent abroad or to servicemen in this country, consumers have almost stood in line at pen counters in the larger cities to buy—when there were any pens to be had. Unfortunately, the manufacturers have pretty generally taken advantage of the situation, and instead of increasing production of their low- and medium-priced lines to meet the abnormal demand have been featuring mostly their very highest-priced pens, of kinds of which very few were sold before the war, and have brought out new pens priced at an extreme luxury level. Pen-and-pencil sets selling from \$10 to \$25, \$64, even \$125 (plus 20% federal luxury tax) can be bought with relative ease; yet it is almost impossible to find good reasonably-priced pens.

As one large retailer advertised, "We have on hand a generous supply of these superb sets [\$19 to \$125 plus tax]. . . A solution to your gift problems, beautiful, compact, easy to mail." The manufacturer of this pen was selling fountain pens alone as cheaply as \$3.95, before the war.

The writing qualities of pens in these expensive sets, unfortunately, are no better than those obtainable in some pens at a small fraction of the price—indeed will often be inferior. Thus the purchaser is paying dearly for the solid gold or gold-plated silver caps, ornamentation which, unfortunately for the buyer, brings them into the luxury class and subjects them to the 20 percent jewelry tax.

Fountain pen manufacturers and dealers have adopted an in-

teresting form of tie-in selling, compelling the purchaser who needs only a pen to purchase a set comprising both pen and pencil. By this means, a very ordinary mechanical pencil which before the war was not particularly popular—for good reasons—and hence a slow moving article which might be sold for perhaps \$1, is made to seem not too expensive at \$5 or \$10.

The fountain pens now being offered at low prices, say \$1 or \$1.50 or thereabouts, are typically of the grade which in pre-war days sold at 20c to 30c in five-and-ten-cent stores. The restrictions on stainless steel for pen points have recently been relaxed, and it is to be expected that the cheaper pens will have points of this alloy again, which is much more desirable than the substitute alloys recently used in most of the lower-priced pens.

If you do not actually need a new pen, now is a good time not to buy, particularly if you have in your home, as most households probably do, several old pens of good make which have been discarded. Usually the repairs needed by such pens are strictly of a minor nature—a new ink sac at 25c to 35c, or in some cases, replacing or straightening of the point; very often, nothing but thorough cleaning is needed, if the pen was a good one, to put it in first-class order. The handy man can do the job himself at home, as a rule, particularly on the pens having the old-fashioned simple side-lever filler located at the middle of the pen barrel. Where an expert is required, there will be no difficulty finding men qualified to do this work by consulting the classified telephone directory. (Such a firm in New York City is the Foster Pen Shop, 503 Fifth Ave.) In any case, remember that *any good pre-war pen competently repaired will likely be far superior to any pens sold at any-*

where near a comparable price in the present market.

Buying Hints

In buying a pen, there are several points to watch. The point should be tried on poor paper before it is purchased. (After the point is decided on, the pen should be filled, and then emptied again, to see if the filler works properly, and if the pen holds a reasonable amount of ink.) Under the present "take it or leave it" attitude of many stores, this procedure may be difficult, but it is far better not to purchase a pen with a somewhat unsatisfactory point, or unreasonably low ink capacity, than to take a chance simply because you chance to have located a pen of a wanted make or type.

For all-round use, the inflexible or "manifold" type of pen point will give the greatest smoothness, writing quality, and resistance to damage by accident, and will, if desired, make a limited number of satisfactory carbon copies. These rather stiff points are more resistant to injury or accident; on the other hand, they have a greater tendency to give some degree of difficulty with clogging and failure to feed properly.

Much has been made in recent advertising of two brands of expensive pens that are claimed to be self blotting or "write dry with wet ink." Under certain very limited conditions (for example where a large amount of business mail must be signed), this feature has some value. For general use, however, it is a dubious advantage, for it must be remembered that a heavy flow of ink is necessary and desirable to achieve maximum permanence and legibility of the writing. For all important writing, it is eminently desirable that the pen should *not* "write dry with

wet ink." (Any pen which does not have a free flow of ink should be used only with the most permanent ink obtainable, if long-lasting writing and signatures are wanted. For the best inks, see CR BULLETIN, August 1944, p.16.)

The lever-type filling mechanism which, when the lever is pulled out from the barrel, compresses the rubber ink sac, and upon being released allows the ink to be drawn up into the sac, is more satisfactory and trouble free than the piston or pump-type filler mechanisms. Attractive as the new filler designs may be, they have serious disadvantages, chief among which is the fact that in some cases repairs can only be made by the factory or a big-city repairman who has special equipment and parts in hand.

Ink capacity is important; some pens hold as little as seven drops of ink (1/3 cc.), whereas to be satisfactory, a full teaspoonful (5 cc.) should be the minimum.

Always look down into the cap (of any cheap pen) to make sure that there is an ink-seal or ring in it which seals off the pen to prevent leakage when the cap is screwed on tight. (See Figure 1.) If this seal is lacking (or imperfect so that poor contact is made with the feed section of the pen), do not buy the pen. There should always be a strong metal band to prevent the cap from splitting if it is screwed or pushed on too tightly.

Do not buy any pen of unknown brand or one which does not show the maker's name or address or *well-known name or trademark* on the pen itself. A manufacturer of first-rate products will not wish to make a secret of the name and location of his business.

With reasonable care, and without accidental damage, a good pen, like a first-class watch, should last a good part of a lifetime. Thus consumers need give little weight to fountain pen guarantees and in no case should anyone pay an extra price for a pen because of its superior "guaranty." (The manufacturer who charges double the normal price for a specially "guaranteed" pen has, of course, an ample margin to cover the expenses in his repair department.)

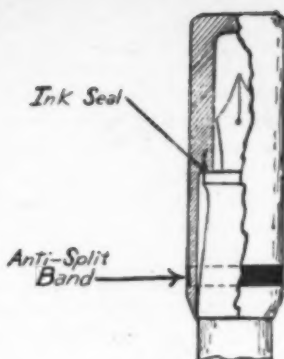


Figure 1

Sectioned view of fountain pen showing anti-split band and arrangement for sealing pen against leakage when cap is in place.

Care of Pens

Many fountain pens perform badly because the owners assume that they may freely shift from one brand and type of ink to another. Re-filling a pen with a different type and brand of ink than that previously used, unless the pen has been *thoroughly* washed out, will soon put any pen out of commission. To clean old ink residues out of a pen requires successive washings, that may in extreme cases require to be spread over several days.

Pens that are not to be used for several weeks or months should be emptied of ink, flushed out thoroughly, and put away empty, or containing clean water. The careful pen user will make it a point to flush out a pen at frequent intervals with plain cold water. (Do not use water from the hot-water tap.)

* * *

The fountain pens listed have been rated on ink capacity, writing characteristics, freedom of ink flow, use tests, and workmanship. Most manufacturers will not at the present time sell direct to the consumer because of a self-imposed rationing system in which available pens are apportioned among their dealers; thus it will be of little use at this time to write to manufacturers for advice as to where their pens or particular models can be purchased.

A. Recommended

Esterbrook, Model J (Esterbrook Steel Pen Mfg. Co., Camden, N.J.) \$3 (\$3.50 in some stores). Five types of 12 kt. white palladium alloy points, believed definitely superior to the yellow silver-palladium alloy used on other low-priced pens (e.g., *Stratford, Universal, Penman, Wexaver*, etc.). Twist-knob type filler mechanism, slow in use but apparently satisfactory. Writing qualities, excellent. Ink capacity, good, though not outstanding. An important advantage of this type of pen is the low cost of replacing a damaged point or inserting a point of a different type. The cheaper 25c, 50c, and 75c points intended for the \$1 Esterbrook, which has now practically disappeared from the civilian market, also fit this pen. These cheaper points are quite satisfactory (writing qualities average about as good as those of the high-priced gold-nib pens), although undoubtedly less durable than the best "iridium-tipped" gold pens. While not as good a buy as the pre-war \$1 Esterbrook, the pens at \$3 are considered equal and even superior to some pens selling at several times their price.

Parker Vacumatic (The Parker Pen Co., Janesville, Wis.) \$8.75. "Two-

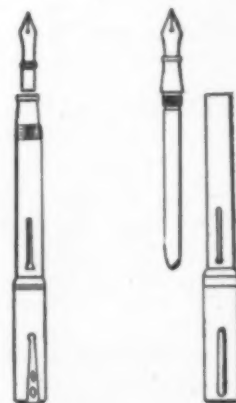


Figure 2

The sketches illustrate the two methods now employed for the quick and inexpensive interchanging or replacement of points. At left, the Esterbrook, whose point section unscrews without removing the ink sac. At right, the Permapoint. The point section and sac are removed and replaced as a unit in this pen.

way writing" point of gold with platinum. Pump filler, mechanism similar (repeated strokes) to that of *Parker 51*. Semi-transparent barrel to show ink content. Writing quality and finish, excellent. Ink capacity, good, but not as resistant to ink flooding as *Parker 51* and *Sheaffer Triumph*. This is the cheapest *Parker* pen readily available on the present market, and is considered the equal of the *Parker 51*, costing 43% more, for all practical purposes; superior in one respect, having a transparent barrel.

Waterman's Ideal (L. E. Waterman Co., 344 Hudson St., New York 13, New York) \$3.50. One of the very few lower priced pens of good make found on present market. Small point of 14 kt. gold. Filler, lever type. Well finished, but lacked anti-split ring on cap. Writing quality, good. Ink capacity, fair. When purchased, lever filling action was defective, necessitating its return to manufacturer, who repaired it without charge. This and the other *Waterman* pens listed below are among the best, and priced fairly low, considering present market.

Waterman's Ideal Commando, No. 515 (L. E. Waterman Co.) \$5. Large 14 kt. gold point. Filler, lever type. Two narrow gold-filled or plated anti-split bands on cap. Writing quality, very good. Ink capacity, same as No. 875.

Waterman's, No. 875 (L. E. Waterman Co.) \$8.75. Large 14 kt. gold point. Filler, lever type. Well finished and had wide gold-filled or plated band on cap. Writing quality, very good. Ink capacity, fair. "100-year" guaranty.

Waterman's De Luxe, No. 1003 (L. E. Waterman Co.) \$10. Similar to No. 875, except had slightly larger point and greater ink capacity. "100-year" guaranty.

Waterman's De Luxe, No. 1352 (L. E. Waterman Co.) \$13.50, plus tax. Similar to other *Waterman* "100-year" pens, except for gold-filled cap which was pushed on instead of screwed into place.

B. Intermediate

Eversharp Fifth Avenue (Eversharp Inc., 1800 Roscoe St., Chicago 13) \$12.50, plus tax. Gold point almost completely shrouded in a tapered plastic point section similar to *Parker 51*. Filler, lever type. Push-on type cap of gold plated silver with match-

ing barrel end. Writing qualities, fair. Ink capacity, very poor. (With ink sac in normal condition; sac of this pen, as purchased, had a badly twisted shape suggesting poor control over assembly of parts at factory.) Relatively resistant to flooding. Similar in several respects to the *Parker 51*, but considered to fall considerably short of being as well designed as the *51*. This pen, with pencil, is available from Sears, Roebuck & Co., at \$19 (plus tax of \$3.80).

Eversharp Skyline (Eversharp, Inc.) \$5. Gold point, small but of good quality. Filler, lever type. Excessively streamlined design. Writing qualities, very good. Ink capacity, fairly low for the type and size of pen. The manufacturer asserts that the price of this pen should have been \$3.95; the \$5 price actually paid by CR being, according to Eversharp, Inc., a dealer's overcharge. However, the Eversharp company has been unable to supply names of dealers who would have even the \$5 pen in stock, and many dealers shopped by CR in several cities had no pens of *Eversharp* make as cheap as \$5; most had very few or none under about twice that price. Dealers noted that there was no difficulty at all in obtaining for sale *Eversharp* sets at \$64 and \$125.

Parker 51 (The Parker Pen Co.) \$12.50 up. Gold point almost completely shrouded in a tapered plastic point section from which only one-sixteenth inch of the point protrudes. Pump filler mechanism, like that of the cheaper *Parker Vacumatic*, slow to fill, requiring repeated strokes. Push-on cap. Writing qualities, fair. Ink capacity, very good and relatively resistant to flooding. Choice of points limited. (The special *51* ink is of abnormal type and mediocre rather than "super" quality.) This type of pen has certain advantages due to its well protected and supported point, as for example in making carbon copies, and can be lent for the use of others with less risk of damage than would be incurred with the conventional type of pen. Directions accompanying the *51* must be closely read and followed. A good pen but, except for its "luxury value," not considered worth its very high price. Several pens though used only a short time have had trouble with the pump filler mechanism necessitating return to the company for repairs; hence might

be a poor pen, in spite of low cost repair service, for anyone traveling to distant places or likely to be away from a big city having *Parker* repair service (for such people, should be rated C).

Sheaffer Defender (W. A. Sheaffer Pen Co., Fort Madison, Iowa) \$5. Writing qualities, good, but somewhat inferior to the cheaper *Sheaffer Miss Universe*. Ink capacity, very good. A well-finished pen, but few are available.

Sheaffer Miss Universe (W. A. Sheaffer Pen Co.) \$3.50. Gold point, pump filler, single stroke type. Semi-transparent barrel to show ink content. Writing qualities, very good. Ink capacity, unusually good for a pen of its small size. A suitable pen for the use of any woman who does not object to the pump-type filler discussed under *Sheaffer Triumph*. Two pens of this type out of a moderate number examined and used have given trouble (complete failure of the pump mechanism to function); otherwise would have received an A rating. For men, a similar pen is the *Sheaffer Craftsman* at the same price.

Sheaffer Triumph Lifetime (W. A. Sheaffer Pen Co.) \$12.50. 14 kt. gold point of unusual design, lower part being cylindrically shaped, covering a large ink feeding mechanism. Pump filler, single-stroke type, somewhat difficult to operate, and with some pens has given repeated trouble with failure of pump to fill pen. See concluding comments under *Parker 51*, which apply even more to this pen, perhaps, than the *51*. Semi-transparent barrel to show ink content. Cap secured by a single turn (desirable). Writing qualities, fair, but not superior. Ink capacity and resistance to flooding, very good.

Venus President (American Pencil Co., Hoboken, N.J.) \$3. Point, 14 kt. gold, iridium tipped. Filler, standard lever type. Cap tends to fall off, in use. Writing quality, fair. Ink capacity, poor. Similar to pens sold at about \$1 before the war.

* * *

The following B-rated pens would probably warrant a C rating in normal times.

Permapoint (Eberhard Faber Pencil Co., 37 Greenpoint Ave., Brooklyn 22, N.Y.) \$1. Some points of silver alloy, some plated stainless alloy. Filler, lever type. Writing quality, only fair. Ink capacity, fair. Re-

movable writing assembly consisting of point, feed section, and sac, available in four different types of points at 30c each, but in only limited distribution and hence may be difficult to find. Method of renewing points, which come as a unit with ink sac, judged not as satisfactory as *Esterbrook's*.

Stratford Conqueror 700 SP (Salz Bros. Inc., Salz Bldg., New York 1, New York) \$1.50 (advertised price, \$1.25). Point of a yellowish alloy of silver and palladium, a wartime substitute for stainless steel (considered much inferior to the white silver-palladium alloy used in the \$3 *Esterbrook* or the chrome-nickel alloy formerly used in the \$1 *Esterbrook* pens). Push-button filler. Writing qualities, fairly good. Ink capacity, poor. Finish, fair.

Universal V 100 (Universal Pen Co., New York City) \$1.50. Point of silver-palladium alloy. Filler, lever type. Writing qualities, fairly good. Ink capacity, good. Finish, fair.

C. Not Recommended

Conklin (The Conklin Pen Co., Chicago) \$1. Iridium-tipped stainless-steel type alloy point. Transparent feed section. Writing quality, poor. Ink capacity, poor. The Federal Trade Commission has charged that the products of this company are of a grade inferior to the original *Conklin*, which was made by a well and favorably-known manufacturer of high-grade pens.

Diamond Point (Manufacturer unknown) \$1. Point of silver-palladium alloy similar to that of the \$1 *Wearever*. Filler, lever type. Writing qualities, poor. Ink capacity, good. Finish, fairly good, considering price. Has been widely sold in department stores.

Morrison (Union Fountain Pen Co.) Promoting and selling so-called military (olive-drab) and naval (blue) pen and pencil sets.

Park-O-Type, Waltham, Winchester, made by the same firm as *Conklin* pens. F.T.C. has charged this firm (which trades under various names including Starr Pen Co., Winchester Pen Co., Waltham Pen Co., and Conklin Pen Co.) with misrepresentation in marking points 14 kt. gold plated and iridium tipped.

Packard (Avon Products Co., New York City) \$1. Point marked "Special alloy." Brand name or maker's

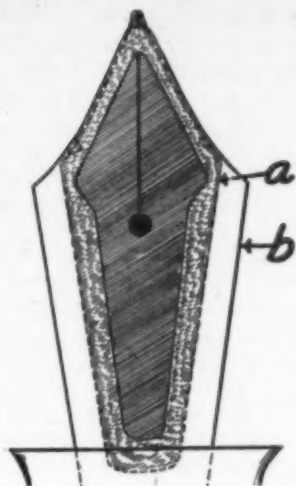


Figure 3

Unsatisfactory type of pen point used in *Wearever De Luxe Presfil*, consisting of (a) a very thin, narrow gold pen, (b) a backing plate made of stainless alloy, shaped around and above the weak gold pen to support the pressure applied in writing.



name appeared only on display card, with no maker's or brand identification on pen. Writing quality, poor. Poorly made and finished.

Penman (The Penman, 179 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1) \$1.50. Point of silver-palladium alloy. Filler, lever type. Writing quality, only fair. Ink capacity, poor. Poorly made and finished. This is another misrepresented brand of fountain pens. As a result of charges by the F.T.C., Penman has recently agreed to discontinue certain misleading representations regarding the value and other characteristics of their pens.

Wearever (David Kahn, North Bergen, N.J.) \$1. Point of yellow silver-palladium alloy. Filler, lever type. Writing qualities, fair. Ink capacity, very poor. Finish, poor.

Wearever De Luxe Presfil (David Kahn) \$1. Special type point—see Fig. 3. Push-button filler. Writing qualities, very poor. Ink capacity, below average. Finish, poor. Has been much sold in ten-cent stores in recent months.

Wearever Zenith (David Kahn) \$1.95. Gold point of relatively poor quality, not well shaped. Filler, lever type. Writing qualities, poor. Ink capacity, unusually poor.

C. Not Recommended

"Stylo" Pens

Ink-O-Graph (Inkograph Co., Inc., 200 Hudson St., New York 13, New York) \$2. A "stylographic" pen. ¶This and other writing devices of its type are not as pleasant to write with as conventional pens with flexible nibs and spoon feed arrangement and have been found usually to clog or become unusable after a short period of time.

Desk Pens and Socket One-Dip Pens

So-called socket pens, if of good quality, are satisfactory for business use where daily or steady use is assured. In the home or where use is infrequent, even the best of them often give trouble. Several manufacturers have brought out "one-dip" ink-well types of pens consisting of a square or round cup-shaped base into which is inverted a standard ink bottle. These seem very convenient and efficient when first put to use, but do not work out well in practice; points are not durable, incrustations of ink dry around the bottom of the pen holder and get on the fingers; the arrangement in general will usually prove unsatisfactory and messy. Since the beginning of the war, some gyp manufacturers have brought out pens of this type which are made of metal (ordinary steel) wholly unsuited to the job, and which rust out in a few days of immersion in ink.

Socket pens, like fountain pens generally, are being sold at inordinately high prices, with one exception, the *Esterbrook* (though that, too, is far above the pre-war price for the corresponding unit).

A. Recommended

Esterbrook (Esterbrook Steel Pen Mfg. Co., Camden, N.J.) Single-pen desk set (pen and base), \$3.25; double-pen set, \$6.50.

C. Not Recommended

Carter's Cube Well (The Carter's Ink Co., Boston) 89c.

Wasp Rite-O-Way (The Wasp Pen Co., Inc., Fort Madison, Iowa) 98c.

Off the Editor's Chest

(Continued from page 2)

and with certain unquestioned exceptions, the performance of these products, designed and executed mostly by big business, is highly creditable by comparison with those made in other countries, and appliances of equal quality are not to be found outside of the United States and Canada, and were not to be found before the war in Germany, France, Italy, or Russia; where a limited variety of some types was available, their prices, in terms of the average man's daily earnings, with a certain few exceptions, were extremely high compared with those asked here.

On the other hand, in the matter of advertising and sales techniques, American concerns, both large and small, have been in a much less enviable position. Their predisposition to price-fixing devices and other means to stifle competition have aroused great antagonism and resentment on the part of consumers, and have been a decisive factor in laying the ground for the widely-held feeling that business concerns, when they are too large, tend to take advantage of their size and commercial power to profiteer at consumers' expense.

Nearly everyone has his pet examples of deceptive advertising, but there are many cases from the Federal Trade Commission's dockets involving big and reputable companies, which at the very least should know better and have higher standards of honesty and consideration for their customers than they manifested in the particular cases. (One of the most deplorable results of misleading advertising by big companies has been its fundamental negation of the scientific and technical research work which such companies' institutional advertising often features, for such advertising is in effect a repudiation of the findings of every competent scientist in

the companies' employ.) Here are a few examples from the Federal Trade Commission's dockets, of some of the misleading advertising of big and reputable companies:

General Motors Corp., Guide Lamp Division, accused of misrepresenting a "Fog Lamp" when "In truth and in fact," reads the complaint, "the aforesaid so-called fog lamp does not penetrate fog or cut under fog and does not permit a driver using said lamp to have complete control of his car and to see clearly the road ahead under adverse driving conditions such as rain, snow, fog and dust, nor does the use of said lamp add immeasurably to safety under such conditions. The use of said lamp does not prevent light from being reflected back into the driver's eyes, and the light therefrom is reflected back into the driver's eyes when used under fog conditions." . . . (F.T.C. Docket 4724)

E. R. Squibb & Sons and their advertising agency, Geyer, Cornell & Newell, Inc., admitted misrepresentation in their claims that use alone of *Squibb Dental Cream* or *Squibb Tooth Powder* would contribute to a material degree to the prevention of tooth decay or that the milk of magnesia in such dentifrices is concentrated. (F.T.C. Stipulation 02949)

The Best Foods, Inc., makers and distributors of *Nucoa Oleomargarine*, were proceeded against by the F.T.C. for misleading advertising including "published illustrations in color, showing, among other things, *Nucoa Oleomargarine* colored yellow in imitation of butter" and "representations that said product is 'churned in fresh, pasteurized milk.'" (Some 4½ years later the matter was dismissed with respect to that part of the complaint on the grounds that the company had stopped making those claims.) (F.T.C. Docket 3545)

The misleading and meaningless guarantees used by many firms have been the subject of much consumer resentment and governmental action. Those of famous fountain pen manufacturers have been notorious for the falsity of their claims of free and lifetime service; the spurious character of the mileage guarantees of some

makes of automobile tires and of "lifetime" durability of plated table silverware have all been discovered and resented by their victims. Deceptive guarantees have been exploited as a sales device by many companies that ought to know better than risk public good will in such reckless fashion.

Price-fixing activities on the part of large firms are particularly to be condemned, for the very corporate power and presumed efficiency of big concerns should make it unnecessary for them to carry on any sort of practice that would prevent the free play of competition and the freest flow of their goods to strictly competitive markets; if they are as competent as their stockholders and customers are asked to believe, they should be able to make as much money as the size and risk of their business warrants by the simple process of making and marketing their product with competence and efficiency and with the support of capably staffed scientific and engineering laboratories (which only the largest companies can afford on any sizable scale). Yet some of our most noted firms and largest advertisers in many branches of industry have been found guilty of acts in restraint of trade in violation of the Sherman Act (and fined in some cases for such violations), including Owens Illinois Glass Co., Hazel-Atlas Glass Co., the Corning Glass Works, Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co., Procter & Gamble Co., Lever Brothers Co., The General Baking Co., Ward Baking Co., Continental Baking Co., the Kraft Cheese Company, and the Borden Cheese Company. The F.T.C. has found Eastman Kodak Co. had engaged in price-fixing and unfair methods of competition in its manner of selling and pricing its *Kodachrome* and magazine motion picture film.

It must, in all fairness, be pointed out that the government itself has from the days of NRA, beginning in 1933, given a powerful lead to the natural desire of businessmen to avoid "the grind-

(Continued on page 18)

MECCHANICAL PENCILS have their devotees, and some people use them for a time and then tire of them. For anyone doing a considerable amount of writing, a mechanical pencil will usually be found a poor substitute for the regular wood pencil. On the other hand, for those who use a pencil only off and on and not steadily for any considerable period, the mechanical pencil has certain advantages, the most important of which is that it is usually ready for use (provided it doesn't require reloading) without the need for resharpening. An effort to overcome the disadvantage of the standard mechanical pencils, which never have a sufficiently sharp point for some uses, by the development of a thinner lead and mechanism to suit, was only a partial solution, for even the thin-lead automatic pencils do not write a fine enough line for many common purposes (for example, editorial work where neat and very legible interlinear writing in manuscript is necessary). Nearly all the manufacturers of mechanical pencils have made some serious errors in design. The bulk, weight, surface finish, or some other important factor has always been wrong in some respect for a pencil that was to be useful for continuous writing without undue fatigue.

For most users, the "fine-line" or extra-thin lead (.036 in. diam.) type of pencil is certainly very much to be preferred to those using the thicker lead (.046 in.), for use with black leads. Not being able to use a mechanical pencil with colored leads puts it under further handicap, and the fine-line pencils very commonly give trouble with colored leads; the result of the mechanism's jam-

ming with such leads may be a permanently damaged or useless pencil.

If it is necessary to buy a mechanical pencil of a kind whose brand and quality is not known, there are two important items to check: First, the lead must be supported tightly at the point so that there is no sidewise play—that is, it must be a strictly snug fit in the chuck or tube from which it emerges; looseness of lead at this point interferes decidedly with easy and satisfactory writing. Second, there must be no springiness in the endwise direction permitting the lead to move in and out of the pencil when writing. Even a few thousandths of an inch of such motion can make a pencil unsatisfactory. These defects are common in even some of the best known makes of screw-feed mechanical pencils. Pencils which one unscrews at the middle to get at the eraser are common and these are also a heavy handicap except for most incidental or occasional use.

At the present time, mechanical pencils are of low quality, except those which are sold at inordinately high prices. The fairly good pencils which formerly could be bought for 20c or thereabouts have disappeared, and pencils of about that pre-war quality are now being sold at \$1 or more. There used to be good mechanical pencils in ten-cent stores. Now the offerings there are nearly all of types to be avoided.

A. Recommended

Autopoint (Autopoint Co., 1801 W. Foster Ave., Chicago 40) 35c up to

Mechanical Pencils

about \$1.25 or more, depending on size, finish, and other features. This is easily the best pencil of all the screw-feed brands. Mechanical details are well designed and executed; workmanship superior. Available for both .036 in. and .046 in. short leads (1½ in. long).

B. Intermediate

Eagle Automatic 75-60. 15c at ten-cent stores.

"Repeater" Pencils

Repeater-type pencils which feed the lead out step by step upon pushing a button at the top of the pencil and feed a new lead into place when the old one is used up, are a distinct advantage from the convenience and readiness standpoint, but unfortunately the feeding mechanism required for such a pencil takes better design and workmanship than manufacturers in general seem prepared to put into them. Such pencils, therefore, with the single exception noted in the B listing, must be bought with particular caution.

B. Intermediate

Eversharp (Eversharp, Inc., 1800 Roscoe St., Chicago 13) "Repeating" type pencil priced at \$2 to \$6.50, plus 20% jewelry tax on the higher-priced pencils (which are mechanically like the cheaper ones). Available only for the "square-type" larger diameter (.046 in.) leads, 1½ in. long. Disadvantage of the larger leads has been discussed in the text of this article.

C. Not Recommended

The following mechanical pencils have been found to have or develop unsatisfactory qualities in some respect during a period of use.

Push-Button Type, Larger Lead (.046 inch lead)

Esterbrook Push Pencil; Presto.

* * *

The multicolor mechanical pencil also *Not Recommended* is

Norma. \$2 to \$3 and up. A widely sold 3-color pencil novelty.

Off the Editor's Chest

(Continued from page 14)

stone of competition" by its various restrictive code practices deliberately set up to prevent active competition in price and service, and by its official and aggressive publicity stigmatizing active and efficient competitors by such terms as "chiseler" and "price-cutter." Moreover, there is no doubt that the present practices of the OPA fully encourage such policies; the so-called price-control scheme has gulled the consumer into the belief that price control keeps prices down, whereas it has actually done so only on a few "strategic" commodities quite misleadingly designated by the government as "cost-of-living commodities." Many of these, indeed, such as butter, have been nearly driven off the market in many places as a result, by the price-control technique, not because of any inherent scarcity of the basic milk fat used in butter making, but because those in control preferred to favor consumption of fluid milk and cream and of margarine rather than butter. Sugar and many common and necessary children's garments are examples of other products that have been very scarce at times; other things have become unobtainable because the manufacturer or dealer simply declines to sell them at a price which does not permit him to make a living.

It must be admitted, too, that the small businessman is as ready to support the game of price-fixing and market restriction as is the big fellow. The retailer's resentment against the big firm is often based upon the big fellow's failure to guarantee him a fixed and uniform resale price in the consumer market. There has been a marked tendency on the part of some businessmen, who opposed price-fixing at the beginning, *now to oppose its discontinuance* because they have discovered the pleasantness of not having to

compete with other dealers on the price of shoes, soaps, or canned fruit and other articles.

It is true that many in the United States are looking forward to the day when they can throw their ration books in the waste basket and be able to buy their groceries and gasoline without limitation, and generally conduct the business of everyday living with a minimum of governmental supervision. Perhaps the wartime experiences may have taught many to give up their readiness to insist that "there ought to be a law."

In a very real sense the big companies have a chance to re-establish themselves in public esteem and to shake off the stigma which is attached to many of them because of their serious and often repeated dishonesty in manufacturing and in advertising and sales practices. They can, if they will, take the lead in creating a feeling of general good will on the part of consumers by relying for their sales on the *excellence of their products, the honesty and conservativeness of their sales policies, and by refraining from making extravagant claims, offers, and guarantees.*

Price-fixing is the lazy business administrator's way of avoiding hard work. Both big and little business, whether in manufacturing or retailing, have shown a characteristic weakness for taking the easiest road in this respect, but it is *big business* that "takes the rap" for such practices in public opinion, and it is big business that should be most assiduous at setting its house in order.

There will be a time after the war during which consumers may be so glad to get whatever is made, again, that they will buy it without their customary sales resistance or questioning of price, but after the first buying enthusiasm wears off, it will take much more than high-power advertising, more even than well-made and efficient products, to retain consumer good will and approval. The situation will call for intelligent and strictly honest advertising and a policy of refraining from every measure

of pressure or ganging up on firms that cut prices or refuse to come into a price-fixing deal or combine.

Many consumers resent paying prices inflated by the scarcity economics that has stemmed from the governmental attitude of dividing up rather than producing more, and that has infected much of business enterprise in wartime. Every person who has not benefited by high wartime wages (and there are millions of such persons) has been squeezed by the combination of OPA and WPB policies superimposed upon the businessmen's wish to make every transaction pay the highest possible profit. One photographic journal recently suggested, in mentioning consumers' being habituated to buying at full list prices, during wartime, that "Cut-rate dealers will be amazed to learn how much *less* merchandise they will have to sell in order to make as much profit as when selling at 20% off." If such uneconomic and "screw-ball" ideas are permitted to carry into the after-the-war period, there will again be a period of public ill-will to be endured by corporate enterprise in this country, and it may be even more disastrous to corporation standing and earnings than were the results of their last mistakes of the same sort.

Since *big business* can best afford to refrain from every device or practice that would take unfair advantage of the consuming public, those who represent big business enterprises and determine its policies in association with others through manufacturers' associations, trade associations, chambers of commerce, the National Industrial Conference Board, and other powerful agencies of education and persuasion of business leadership have every reason to "get going" right away on the very important job of preparing businessmen throughout the nation for their duty of establishing *by meritorious performance*—not by promises and publicity campaigns—a new climate of public opinion about business for the period after the war.

HAVE you ever shivered in bed although the blankets were so heavy that when you woke in the morning you were tired from the weight of the bedclothes? If so, you know that one of the most desirable qualities of a good bed blanket is warmth with a minimum of weight. Warmth and weight in a blanket depend chiefly on the type and quality of fiber, the weave, and the napping.

The heat-insulating properties of a blanket are determined not only by the fiber used, but by the fact that the fibers entrap millions of cells of air through which the transfer of heat is greatly retarded. Air itself is a very poor conductor of heat if it is divided up into small elements so as to prevent the transfer of heat by air movement or circulation (convection).

Fibers Used in Blankets

Wool makes the best blanket for warmth, for the natural resiliency of the wool fibers keeps them in position through a long period of use and washing, whereas other fibers tend to become matted, and the air cells are thus greatly reduced in number and volume. Wool with long fibers is to be preferred to wool with short fibers since it makes a longer and stronger nap that is not so likely to pull out and deteriorate in appearance and insulating properties in use.

Where the price of all-wool blankets seems too high, consumers may in some cases find it justifiable to purchase cotton-and-wool and rayon-and-wool blankets. Such blankets, properly constructed, have good warmth-retaining properties. It is generally agreed that a blanket should contain at least 25 percent wool for

warmth, and studies have shown that the most desirable construction for cotton-and-wool blankets is for the cotton fibers to be used only in the warp yarns. If cotton is used for the filling yarns as well, the heat-retaining qualities of the blanket will be markedly less than those of an all-wool blanket.

Cotton-and-wool blankets have a disadvantage in that they shrink more than all-wool ones. In a recent test, the shrinkage of part-wool blankets (containing 25 to 50 percent wool) was nearly twice that of all-wool blankets. This shrinkage tends to increase the weight of the blanket per square yard, and while it will thus feel heavier, the change will not have been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the warmth. Part-cotton blankets have a further disadvantage because cotton is a vegetable fiber and is thus more susceptible to moisture than wool. A blanket containing cotton may, therefore, feel more damp, and therefore colder, than an all-wool blanket when the humidity is high and in damp climates.

Permanently-crimped rayon fibers are more resilient than cotton, and nap made of this fiber stays fluffier than cotton after washing. The wool-rayon blankets also have a very attractive appearance. Rayon fibers also do not shrink so much as wool fibers and, of

course, have the advantage of not being damaged by moths. In spite of these advantages, a blanket with an all-wool nap, as a rule, is a better choice than one with a rayon nap. A well constructed, heavily napped blanket containing a large percentage of fibers other than wool may have an initial heat-retaining value comparable to that of a good all-wool blanket. Use and washing, however, may be expected to deteriorate the mixed-fiber blanket since rayon (and cotton, too) do not possess the great resiliency of wool.

Both rayon and cotton when napped catch fire very easily (wool does not), and it would be desirable that such blankets should have a flame-resisting treatment before being sold to consumers. Labels of blankets that have been so treated should show that they have been flame-proofed and should also have a warning regarding need for renewal of the treatment when the blanket is washed.

So far as concerns selecting the fiber they wish in a blanket, consumers are in a much better position today when buying blankets than they were before the Wool Products Labeling Act went into effect on July 14, 1941. Under the provisions of this Act, blankets containing wool must bear a label which shows the propor-

Wool and Part-Wool Blankets



tion of the several fibers present as a percentage of the total fiber weight, *exclusive of ornamentation when the ornamentation does not exceed 5 percent*. The term "wool" includes the various hair fibers, such as mohair, with the exception of Angora rabbit. The consumer should note that under the Act fibers which are less than 5 percent by weight of the product need not be named on the label.

Weaves

Because of the napping process, it is almost impossible for a consumer, when buying blankets, to determine what kind of weave is used; this is difficult even when the nap is separated so that the base yarns can be seen. For good lasting qualities in a blanket and assurance that it will keep its shape and good condition well through laundering, it is important that the weave be close and so far as practicable "balanced" (having approximately the same number of threads running in each direction of the blanket). It has been proposed that an all-wool blanket of medium or heavy weight should have at least 24 threads in the warp direction and 16 in the filling direction.

While the consumer will not be able to determine for herself in the store whether these requirements are met, the weave can be examined by holding the blanket up to the light. The light should show through the blanket in little "pin points," evenly distributed over the blanket.

"Fulling" and Napping

Blankets as they come from the loom are pieces of heavy woolen cloth, usually in a simple twill weave, with a fairly smooth

surface. These pieces of cloth are then "fulled" (a process of shrinking the fabric without causing undue felting); by this method a 100-inch width as woven may be shrunk to 72 inches.

The next process is to produce the nap on this fairly smooth shrunken fabric. This is done by running the fabric through a machine which raises a portion of the filling (cross-wise) yarns into a fuzzy surface; this provides the air entrapment that makes the blanket warm. The thicker and fluffier the nap, the better will be its insulating qualities and the warmer the blanket.

Manufacturers in an effort to improve the wooliness and other characteristics of a blanket which impress the consumer with its probable warmth, often overnap or raise too great a proportion of the filling fibers into the nap surface. This, of course, definitely weakens the fabric, since the nap is produced at the cost of the weave structure which determines the strength of the blanket.

The nap should be firmly fastened in the fabric if the blanket is to be strong and durable. If the fuzzy surface can be easily rubbed off the blanket by a circular motion with a finger, or if it can be pulled out easily, it should be assumed that the blanket has been overnapped, or that the fibers used in the yarns were too short. It is a rough general rule that it should be possible to lift a blanket by the nap, holding as many of the fibers as can be caught between the thumb and two fingers. This is a rather severe test, however, and a merchant should perhaps not be blamed if he should object to its being applied indiscriminately, by a person not aware of the damage

its careless use may cause the blanket.

Tensile Strength

A factor closely related both to the weave and the nap of a blanket, is the tensile strength. Blankets are not ordinarily subjected to much pulling unless they are too small when purchased, or shrink to too small a size after washing (as may readily happen). Sometimes the homemaker makes the bed with the blanket so far down that the sleeper pulls it up; doing this habitually can greatly shorten the life of the blanket.

The importance of tensile strength in a blanket, however, is probably greatest when the blanket is being washed, for abnormally weak blankets (such as are sold in the lowest-price brackets) may almost fall to pieces in the washing because of weak filling yarns—yarns either unduly weak originally or too greatly weakened by napping. (Some blankets are so very weak, indeed, that the strength of the hands easily suffices to tear them. Some years ago a three-year-old girl had no difficulty in tearing one of the blankets tested by CR, easily pulling it apart with her hands.) A blanket that is much weaker than it ought to be can be usually detected if the blanket is stretched with both hands and, at the same time, finger-pressure is forced from beneath.

Blankets of the weight included in this test, to be of satisfactory durability, it would appear, should have a tensile strength of not less than 35 to 45 pounds per inch of width in the warp direction, and 25 to 35 pounds in the filling direction (when tested by grab method). Ideally, the strength in the two directions of the

finished blanket should be as nearly equal as possible.

The tensile strength of a blanket ought to have a reasonable relationship to its weight, since the heavier blankets need extra strength to stand without damage the handling they receive in use and laundering. The strength should also have a reasonable relationship to the compressibility, which is the measure of the degree of napping or "loftiness" of the blanket.

Sizes and Colors

Manufacturers are now allowed to make wool blankets in a size no longer than 84 inches—a length which home-making experts consider satisfactory for most beds. The width of the binding material is limited to three inches—which thus appears as about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch width on both sides. A government order limits manufacturers to four colors, in addition to white, and most manufacturers make blue and rose, with two other colors, most frequently green, peach, rust, or yellow.

Weight

Homemakers tend to give too much weight to lightness and do not realize that to a certain extent, weight must be taken as a necessary accompaniment of strength and warmth. The stronger and heavier blankets tend to be the warmer ones, and also will give greater durability in hard use. Men tend to choose heavier blankets than women, especially when purchasing a blanket for a camp or country lodge. Blankets that weigh less than 12 ounces per square yard (corresponding to about $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. for a 72 x 84 blanket) are likely to be lacking in either warmth or

strength or both. The blankets included in the present test were of about 4 to 5 pounds in weight.

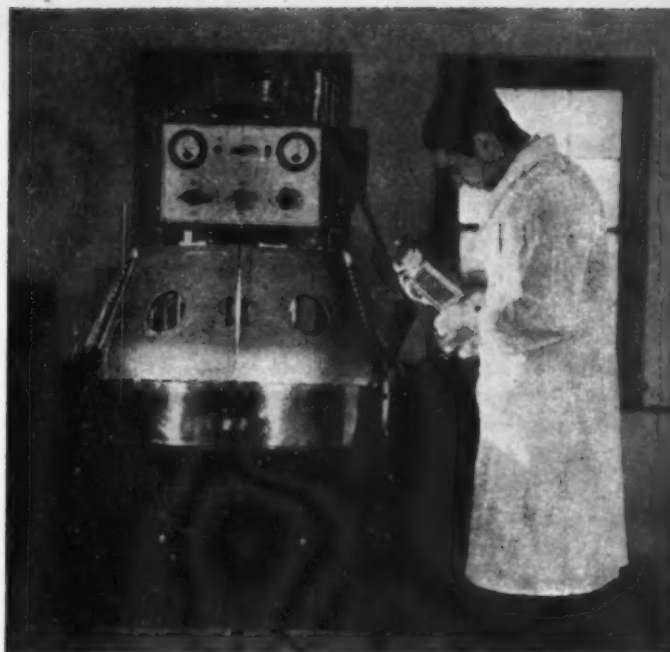
CR's Tests

For the present test, eleven blankets were purchased in retail stores. All were marked 72 x 84 inches (except the *Nashua Purrey*, which was 72 x 90 inches). Eight of the blankets were labeled all-wool, two were 50% cotton and 50% wool, one was 88% rayon and 12% wool.

The blankets were tested to determine tensile strength in both warp and filling directions, before washing. (Tensile strength after washing is of less interest, since the first washing often makes the blankets stronger than when new, especially when excessive shrinkage occurs.) Resistance to fading of both the blankets and their

bindings was tested in a Fade-O-Meter, in which each hour was equivalent to 1.3 hours in strong sunlight. Samples were exposed for periods of from six to thirty hours, by increments of six hours (in order to be able to identify blankets which faded to some degree after relatively short exposure). Where no mention of the colorfastness to light of the blanket or its binding occurs in the listings, both were judged satisfactory.

It is significant that the only blankets which faded badly were the blue ones; and that all the blue blankets in the test faded badly. This would indicate that one of the other popular colors might be a better buy where a blanket is likely to be exposed to strong light or sunlight, and Christmas gift buyers who want their blanket gift to keep its new appearance



Fading of blankets was tested in this Fade-O-Meter. Each hour in this machine was equivalent to 1.3 hours in strong sunlight.

as long as possible, would usually be well advised to select another shade. In CR's present test, light shades showed better resistance to fading than the darker shades.

Thread count and the type and quality of the fibers used were determined for each blanket.

The condition of the wool fiber in all of the blankets was found to be satisfactory, and the grades of wool used were, on the whole, good, and superior to those used in blankets tested by Consumers' Research in 1939. There is a necessary compromise in respect to the matter of the coarseness of the wool. The coarser wools have an advantage in resiliency which tends to make the nap recover well after laundering. The finer grades have a softer feel, but the nap on such a blanket may not stand up as well with wear and laundering. Two blankets contained mohair along with the wool. This fiber is a desirable addition.

Somewhat better than the other blankets from the standpoint of warmth when new were the *Slumbersound 8582*, *Wool O' the West*, *Chatham Marley*, *Chatham Woolwich*, *Saint Marys Jefferson*, and the *Slumbersound 8131*; however it should be noted that as to blankets that are all of the relatively standard type selected by CR for these tests, the difference between the heat transmission for the superior blankets and the others will, as a rule, not be significant.

Results of the tests showed that there had been compromises made in the design and manufacture of all the blankets—i.e., there was no blanket in the group whose properties were good in all respects. The *Amer-*

ican, although a good blanket, especially when its low price is considered, had a thread count of 24 x 18; this, while within the suggested limit of 24 x 16 for an all-wool blanket, was relatively low. This blanket, a blue one, also faded badly.

The *Sears Slumbersound 8131*, although it had a very high breaking strength in the warp, was below the suggested limit in filling strength for a blanket of its weight and compressibility. This blanket also was narrow, about 69 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in width, although sold as a 72-inch width blanket.

It is to be hoped that at least some of the manufacturers will give consideration to the defects of their blankets and improve their quality so that their product will be satisfactory in all respects. Then the consumer can decide which blanket from many good ones she will wish to buy, rather than which of the blankets on display includes defects which she can best put up with.

The price ratings in the listings which follow are based on comparative prices per square yard of actual blanket area. Part-wool blankets are rated in a separate group from the all-wool ones. All blankets were claimed to be 72 x 84 inches, except the *Nashua Purrey* which was labeled 72 x 90. The sizes given in the listings are the actual or measured sizes.

All-Wool Blankets

A. Recommended

Kenwood, Famous (Kenwood Mills, F. C. Huyck & Sons, Albany, N.Y.) \$14.95. Peach. 71 x 84 $\frac{1}{4}$ (narrow). Weight, 15.2 oz. per sq. yd. Wool, with a trace of viscose rayon and cotton. Blanket binding showed noticeable, but not objectionable, fading in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths best of the blankets tested: of warp, 96 lb. (more than

twice the minimum warp breaking strength suggested for this kind of blanket); of filling, 45 lb. (well above the minimum breaking strength for the filling yarns suggested for this kind of blanket). Thread count, 28 x 19, relatively low, but meets 24 x 16 minimum suggested for this kind of blanket. 3

B. Intermediate

American (American Woolen Co., 225 Fourth Ave., New York 3, New York; distributed by Gimbel Bros., Inc., New York City) \$8.95. Blue. 74 x 84. Weight, 14.2 oz. per sq. yd. Wool and mohair, with a trace of cotton. Blanket showed a rather serious degree of fading; binding faded slightly in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 57 lb.; filling, 39 lb. (both well above the suggested minimum requirements). Thread count, 24 x 18, lowest of blankets tested, but meets 24 x 16 minimum suggested for this kind of blanket. 1

Chatham, Woolwich (Chatham Mfg. Co., Elkin, N.C.) \$10.95. Blue. 71 x 83 $\frac{1}{4}$ (narrow and short). Weight, 17.3 oz. per sq. yd. Wool, with a trace of cotton and viscose rayon. Blanket showed a rather serious degree of fading in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 57 lb.; filling, 32 lb. (much too low). Thread count, 26 x 26. 2

North Star, Starlight (North Star Woolen Mill Co., Minneapolis 1) \$13.95. Rose dust. 73 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 83 $\frac{1}{4}$ (short). Weight, 14.2 oz. per sq. yd. Wool, with a trace of cotton. Blanket binding showed slight fading in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 37 lb. (low); filling, 42 lb. Thread count, 27 x 32. 2

Wool O' the West, The Vogue (Portland Woolen Mills, Portland, Oreg.) \$13.95. Dusty rose. 73 x 84 $\frac{1}{4}$. Weight, 14.4 oz. per sq. yd. All wool. Tensile strengths: warp, 30 lb. (low); filling, 44 lb. Thread count, 25 x 32. 2

St. Marys, Jefferson (St. Marys Woolen Mfg. Co., St. Marys, Ohio) \$14.95. Rose. 71 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 83 $\frac{1}{4}$ (narrow and short). Weight, 13.7 oz. per sq. yd. Wool and mohair with traces of viscose rayon and cotton. Blanket binding showed noticeable fading in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 39 lb.; filling, 53 lb. Thread count, 26 x 34. 3

Slumbersound, No. 8131 (Sears-Roebuck's Cat. No. 56-8131) \$14.19, plus postage. Rose. 69 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 84 $\frac{1}{2}$

(narrow). Weight, 14.8 oz. per sq. yd. Wool and mohair. Tensile strengths: warp, 106 lb. (very high); filling, 32 lb. (low). (Tensile strengths of this blanket showed very poor balance.) Thread count, 39 x 46. **3**

Springfield, Regina (Springfield Woolen Mills, Springfield, Tenn.; distributed by Wamsutta Mills, New Bedford, Mass.) \$14.98. Blue. 72 x 85 inches. Weight, 13 oz. per sq. yd. Wool and mohair of good quality; the fiber in this blanket was of the highest quality of any of the blankets tested. Blanket showed a rather serious degree of fading in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 74 lb.; filling, 23 lb. (low).

Thread count, 29 x 42.

Part-Wool Blankets **B. Intermediate**

Chatham, Marley (Chatham Manufacturing Co., Elkin, N.C.) \$7.95. Blue. 72 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 85 $\frac{3}{4}$. Weight, 13.5 oz. per sq. yd. 50% wool, 50% cotton. Blanket showed noticeable fading in the light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 47 lb.; filling, 23 lb. (much too low). Thread count, 35 x 44. **1**

Pursey by Nashua (Nashua Mfg. Co., Nashua, N.H.) \$6.45. Rose dust. 74 x 89 $\frac{1}{2}$. Weight 12.2 oz. per sq. yd. 88% viscose rayon and 12% wool. Slight fading in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 41 lb.; filling, 42 lb. Thread count, 30 x 35. This blanket's *B. Intermediate* rating applies if it is to be used in service where it would not be subjected to much use and laundering, as for example a spare or guest room blanket.

Slumbersound, No. 8582 (Sears-Roebuck's Cat. No. 56-08582) \$6.70, plus postage. Rose. 71 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 83 $\frac{1}{2}$. Weight, 13.9 oz. per sq. yd. 50% wool, 50% cotton. Blanket showed a serious degree of fading in light-exposure test. Tensile strengths: warp, 53 lb.; filling, 40 lb. Thread count, 40 x 42 (good and well balanced). **1**

Performing the Impossible, ★ ★ ★ ***by Government Order***

★ ★ ★
ONE of the numerous contradictions in governmental policy that would be amusing if it were not so serious and perhaps economically destructive to those concerned, is one in which the City of New York has instituted "criminal proceedings against owners who fail to install sprinkler systems" required by New York State law, although the War Production Board says those sprinkler systems *must not be purchased*, under wartime restrictions.

City officials take an attitude which is common with officials in a given government department who say *their* duty is to enforce the law, and that they are not concerned with what the WPB or some other governmental agency is doing with *another* law or regulation. Nevertheless, it has never been clear why any city, federal, or state governmental agency should depart so far from ordinary common sense and fair dealing as to take a case to court in an attempt to require performance of the impossible

or performance of that which is forbidden by law and by regulations of other agencies having jurisdiction. (There have recently been any number of cases involving federal government orders—with highly dubious legal basis—which required business concerns to carry on a course of conduct that was a clear and direct violation of state or municipal laws.)

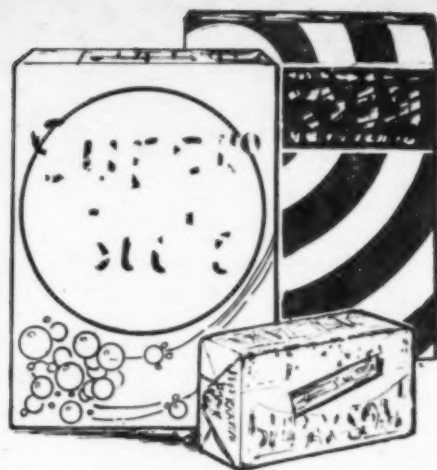
Many of such cases have occurred recently in connection with OPA's system of "price control." A typical one involved the jailing and prosecution of a farm auctioneer because he was alleged to have violated the OPA regulations by selling farm equipment to the highest bidder, whereas the law of his state *required* that as a licensed auctioneer he *must* sell to the highest bidder. Under the OPA's system of farm sales, articles which would sell above the ceiling prices are sold by lot, and go to the drawer of the lucky number, a gambling pro-

cedure which is also and very properly forbidden by state laws designed to protect the interests of buyer and seller alike. Moreover, interference by bureaucratic edict with the process of obtaining highest possible cash returns for a farmer's goods and implements when his property must be sold, is obviously going in contravention to state constitutions which require that property shall not be taken without due process of law.

In the case here cited, the federal prosecuting attorney presented no evidence, apparently fearing the precedent that might be established by the trial if the result came out badly for the federal legalists, and the jury handed down a directed verdict of acquittal. In accordance with its usual practices, however, the OPA will probably proceed similarly as in the past, by threats and arrests, in the hope of frightening auctioneers into what they cannot be forced to do by fair American legal process.



Wartime Laundry Soaps



THE American people should be the cleanest in the world if the amount of soap they use is any measure of cleanliness. It is estimated that in 1935, U. S. soap production was something over 22 pounds per person per year, of which 9 pounds were laundry soap, $3\frac{1}{2}$ pounds soap chips and flakes, 4 pounds granulated and powdered soap, 3 pounds toilet soap, $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of washing powders, and one pound of miscellaneous soaps.

Although there have been some threats of rationing soap due to increased wartime demands and the cutting off of supplies of certain imported soap oils, the situation has eased somewhat due to use of something like a hundred million pounds of lard made available to the soap manufacturers by the War Food Administration. The same agency has also reduced the quality of soap by increasing the amount of rosin and "builders" that may be used. Some recent research by a big industrial company has been quoted to justify this lowering of quality specifications. The data have been used somewhat loosely to prove that rosin in soap is not so undesirable as was once thought. The experiments appear to indicate, however, that the detergency

of soap is improved when the *right* (improved) grade of rosin is used in the *right* amounts, and it was freely admitted that only *ordinary* grades of rosin, for the most part, would be available for use in soaps for the duration. Rosin tends to give soap a sticky feeling and may deposit a yellow color on clothes, particularly when they are boiled in hard water.

"Builders" are usually alkaline substances, such as sodium orthosilicate, sodium metasilicate, trisodium phosphate, and soda ash. One advantage in the use of sodium metasilicate or sodium silicate in a laundry soap is that it prevents reprecipitation of dirt. When, for example, heavily soiled garments are put in the same washing load with garments that are lightly soiled, the latter are likely to have some dirt washed back into them by the time the very dirty clothes are clean.

If, on the other hand, a little silicate is in the wash water, this redepositing of dirt is less likely to occur to a troublesome extent. These substances enhance the action of soap by softening the water and "cutting" the grease. They are much less expensive per pound than soap, hence the soap manufacturers tend to use as much

of them as they can, to decrease their costs and increase profits.

In sections where water is hard, the "built" soaps are particularly useful in helping to eliminate the hard soap curds which are precipitated by the combination of calcium and magnesium compounds with soap alone. The soaps containing "builders", however, should not be used on delicate fabrics. They have the disadvantage too of being more or less irritating to the hands of the user. Somewhat more satisfactory laundry results where the water is hard may be secured by softening the water first and using pure bead and chip soaps. The built soaps and powders, however, do give increased efficiency in washing greasy or badly soiled fabrics.

"Fillers" such as colloidal clays and silicates are sometimes added for the purpose of increasing the mechanical action of the cleaning operation. Most substances added to soap, however, other than alkaline builders, serve no useful purpose and must be regarded as adulterants and fillers or "make-weights."

According to a trade association survey, most people use about 25 percent more soap flakes or chips than is really

necessary. It is advised that the water be churned vigorously after the soap has been added, to secure good suds. For laundering, a suds of three inches is sufficient; for other types of washing a two inch lather should be enough. The shortage of coconut oil that used to come from the Philippines and other Pacific Islands has reduced the use of a soap ingredient that was formerly much used because of its effectiveness in producing suds. The substitute fats and oils produce a soap that is much slower in lathering, but compensate for this by causing less irritation to the skin.

Bar laundry soap has declined in popularity in recent years. No doubt the superseding of the washboard by widespread use of the modern efficient, energy-saving mechanical washing machine had something to do with its passing. Good laundry practice requires that soap be dissolved in the wash water, and this is much more easily accomplished with powdered or flaked soap. The general all-purpose bar soap still has important uses in the household, however.

The laundering of fine fabrics requires the use of a mild, neutral soap and as such a soap has all the properties of a good toilet soap, it can be used for either purpose as desired. A mild soap of this character will also serve well for dishwashing and help reduce injury to the hands, where it is necessary for the hands to be in contact with soapy water for a considerable length of time. The outstanding soap in the current tests was *Ivory*, which was the only bar laundry soap to receive an *A-Recommended* rating. This brand is also much used as a toilet soap, and several sub-



The two beakers in the picture show the importance of water-hardness in determining whether soap shall be wasted, or effectively used, in laundering. The beaker on the left contains soft water, that on the right, hard. There was no difficulty in maintaining a three-inch standing suds on wash water in the left-hand beaker, which height of suds, according to a recent study, is somewhat more than is needed on water used for general laundering purposes in the home. The very small amount of suds shown on the beaker at the right, though it required the same amount of soap, may not be sufficient for the washing. To obtain the needed amount of suds on the water in the right-hand picture would have required the wastage of a good deal of soap; the softening process could be much better performed by suitable addition of trisodium phosphate or tetrasodium pyrophosphate, or a mixture of the two¹.



scribers wrote to CR after reading the report that appeared in the August issue inquiring about the omission of the *Ivory* brand from the listings of toilet soaps. As a toilet soap, *Ivory* receives a *B* rating, having the disadvantage of a small amount of rosin. (Rosin, when present in small or moderate amounts, has generally been considered less objectionable in a laundry soap.)

The value of a particular package or bar of soap to the consumer depends on how much actual soap she gets, along with the other ingredients (chiefly water) that go with all soaps in varying proportions. In

¹These chemicals may be purchased individually from New Dorp Chemical Co., New Dorp, Staten Island, N.Y., or G. S. Robins & Co., 126 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis. New Dorp Chemical Co. sell a mixture of tsp. and tapp. (Phos) in the proportion of 3 to 1 at \$1.25 plus postage for 10 lb. For many purposes, trisodium phosphate, or better, tetrasodium pyrophosphate, may be used alone. Trisodium phosphate is widely sold in grocery stores under various brand names, among which are *Milo*, *Climasene*, *Dif*, *Oskite*, *Whisk*.

addition to having a number of brands tested for their conformity to Federal Specifications, CR has in each case calculated the actual content of "dry soap," and the approximate price per pound of soap.

Ratings are cr44.

Pure Flake, Chip, and Bead Soaps

Chiffon and *White Sail Soap Flakes* contained a small amount of builder, or alcohol-insoluble material.

A. Recommended

Kirkman Pure White Soap Flakes (Kirkman & Son, Div. of Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co., Brooklyn, N.Y.) 18-oz. box, 23c. 21c per lb. actual soap content. Contained coconut oil. Similar in character to *Ivory* cake soap, but superior in that it did not contain rosin. A high-quality soap and best buy in this group, cost considered. 1

Ivory Snow (The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati) 12½-oz. box, 23c. 30c per lb. actual soap content. Similar in character to *Kirkman Flakes*, but 50% more expensive, on the basis of cost per pound of actual soap content. A superior soap in the sense of being all-tallow and made without coconut oil, and hence relatively easy on the hands (compared with *Kirkman Pure White Flakes* and *Chiffon Soap Flakes*). 3

B. Intermediate

Chiffon Soap Flakes (Armour & Co., Chicago) 14-oz. box, 21c. 25c per lb. actual soap content. Contained coconut oil. 2

C. Not Recommended

White Sail Soap Flakes (Distributed by the A. & P. Tea Co.) 12½-oz. box, 14c. 20c per lb. actual soap content. Made chiefly of tallow. In addition to builder, contained some rosin. 1

Flake, Chip, and Bead Soaps with Builders and Fillers

A. Recommended

Octagon Granulated White Grains of Soap (Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co.,

Jersey City, N.J.) 24-oz. box, 23c. 23c per lb. actual soap content. A low-titer tallow soap that would be well suited for laundering at low water temperatures (desirable for washing of silk and woolen fabrics). **1**

New Improved Klek White Beads of Soap (Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co.) 8½-oz. box, 15c. 31c per lb. actual soap content. Contained coconut oil; otherwise best quality soap in this group, and had least amount of builder. **3**

B. Intermediate

Kirkman Granulated Soap (Kirkman & Son, Div. of Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co.) 24-oz. box, 23c. 22c per lb. actual soap content. Contained coconut oil. Contained small amount of rosin. **1**

Duz Granulated Soap (The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati) 21½-oz. box, 23c. 21c per lb. actual soap content. An all-tallow soap. Filler content high, second highest of all the soaps tested. **1**

Rinso (Lever Bros. & Co., Cambridge, Mass.) 9-oz. box, 9½c (2 boxes for 19c). 30c per lb. actual soap content. An all-tallow soap. Had lowest filler content of the group. Had unusually high builder content, second highest of all soaps tested. **3**

Super Suds (Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co.) 24-oz. box, 23c. 29c per lb. actual soap content. Had highest builder content of all soaps tested.

Though a low-titer soap (all-tallow), its high builder content renders it unsuitable for laundering silk and woolen fabrics. **3**

C. Not Recommended

Oxydol (The Procter & Gamble Co.) 24-oz. box, 23c. 22c per lb. actual soap content. Had highest filler content of all soaps tested. A low-titer all-tallow soap, but see comment under *Super Suds*. **1**

Speedup All Purpose Granulated Soap (Distributed by American Stores Co.) 24-oz. box, 21c. 22c per lb. actual soap content. Made chiefly of tallow. High builder content. Contained rosin. **1**

Perk Granulated Soap (Armour & Co.) 9-oz. box, 10c. 27c per lb. actual soap content. Made with coconut oil. High in builder, and high filler content. Contained rosin. **2**

Bar Laundry Soaps

A. Recommended

Ivory (The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati) 9.8-oz. large bar, 10c. 20c per lb. actual soap content. Exceptionally low in alcohol-insoluble and water-insoluble matter (desirable). Contained rosin; fatty matter consisted chiefly of coconut oil and tallow. With *Kirkman Pure White Soap Flakes* and *Ivory Snow*, ranked as the best of the laundry

soaps tested. *Ivory* is not so desirable as a toilet soap because of the presence of rosin and coconut oil (somewhat irritating to skins of some persons). **2**

B. Intermediate

Kirkman Borax Soap (Kirkman & Son, Div. of Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co., Brooklyn, N.Y.) 8.6-oz. bar, 5c. 16c per lb. actual soap content. A low-titer all-tallow soap that would be well suited for laundering at low water temperatures (desirable for washing of silk and woolen fabrics). Outside of limit set by Federal Specifications for water insoluble matter. Contained rosin. **1**

C. Not Recommended

Fels Naphtha (Fels & Co.) 9.4-oz. bar, 5c. 17c per lb. actual soap content. Outside of limit set by Federal Specifications for water insoluble matter and alcohol insoluble matter. A low-titer all-tallow soap that would be well suited for laundering at low water temperatures. Contained rosin. **1**

Octagon Laundry Soap (Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co.) 8.9-oz. bar, 5c. 16c per lb. actual soap content. Outside limit set by Federal Specifications for alcohol insoluble and water insoluble matter. A low-titer all-tallow soap that would be well suited for laundering at low water temperatures. Contained some rosin. **1**

Connector for Electrical Extension Cords

AN extension cord connector that has been sold in 10-cent stores, the "Safe-way" Extension Cord Connector, is one step—though not a very successful one—toward a satisfactory device to permit splicing instead of complete replacement of extension cords to lamps. It might be used for other devices carrying a small current, such as a radio. Splicing of extension cords by soldering and taping the wires is not permitted under Underwriters' regulations, and though many lamp cords and similar electric wires are spliced in households, the job will often be unsatisfactorily done, and definitely

a source of danger, if done by an unskilled person.

The "Safe-way" (Nu-Way Prod. Co.) connector somewhat reduces the risk of a poor job and provides some protection against fire and shock hazard that would certainly not be provided in a poor homemade wire-splicing job. The "Safe-way," however, appears not to have been approved by the Underwriters and it is easily seen why it might not be, for it is weak and it could be broken fairly easily, if stepped on. If made of stronger material with some minor modifications of details, it would be a very useful device. Sev-

eral other makes of connectors are available that have been approved by the Underwriters, but such connectors are larger (more bulky) than the small, thin, flat style typified by the "Safe-way."



**BUY WAR BONDS
AND STAMPS**

Ratings of Motion Pictures



This section aims to give critical consumers a digest of opinion from a number of reviews, ranging from the motion picture trade press to Parents' Magazine, which rates motion pictures not only on their quality as entertainment but on their suitability in various aspects for children.

It should be emphasized that the motion picture ratings which follow do not represent the judgment of a single person but are based on an analysis of the reviews appearing in some 20 different periodicals. (See January 1944 issue for sources of the reviews.)

The figures preceding the title of the picture indicate the number of critics who have been judged to rate the film A (recommended), B (intermediate), and C (not recommended).

Audience suitability is indicated by "A" for adults, "Y" for young people (14-18), and "C" for children, at the end of each line.

Descriptive abbreviations are as follows:

adv—adventure	mus—musical
biog—biography	mys—mystery
car—cartoon	nov—dramatization of a novel
com—comedy	rom—romance
cri—crime and capture of criminals	soc—social-problem drama
doc—documentary	t—in technicolor
dr—drama	trav—travelogue
fan—fantasy	war—dealing with the lives of people in wartime
hist—founded on historical incident	wes—western
mel—melodrama	

A	B	C		
—	9	2	Abroad With Two Yanks.....	war-com A
1	9	6	Address Unknown.....	war-dr A
1	1	3	Adventure in Bokhara.....	mus-com A
1	4	1	Adventure in Music.....	mus-doc AYC
7	8	2	Adventures of Mark Twain.....	biog AYC
—	2	1	Alaska.....	mus-mel A
—	2	7	Allergic to Love.....	mus-com A
—	2	1	Amazing Mr. Forrest, The.....	com A
—	5	3	American Romance, An.....	soc-dr-t AYC
—	5	—	And Now Tomorrow.....	nov A
—	10	8	And the Angels Sing.....	mus-com A
—	2	9	Are These Our Parents?.....	soc-mel A
—	3	3	Arizona Whirlwind.....	wes AYC
3	8	—	Arsenic and Old Lace.....	cri-mel A
—	6	6	Atlantic City.....	mus-com A
3	8	—	Attack.....	war-doc A
—	7	3	Babes on Swing Street.....	mus-com AYC
—	8	11	Barbary Coast Gent.....	wes-mel A
2	12	2	Bathing Beauty.....	mus-com-t A
—	1	5	Beneath Western Skies.....	wes AYC
—	2	7	Bermuda Mystery.....	mys-mel AYC
—	8	7	Between Two Worlds.....	fan A
—	5	5	Big Noise, The.....	com AYC
—	2	7	Black Magic.....	mys-mel A
—	3	7	Black Parachute, The.....	war-mel A
—	3	5	Block Busters.....	com A
—	2	2	Bluebeard.....	cri-mel A
—	3	—	Bordertown Trail.....	wes AYC
—	1	2	Bowery to Broadway.....	mus-com A
2	1	—	Brazil.....	mus-com AYC
1	7	4	Bride by Mistake.....	com A
—	—	7	Call of the Jungle.....	mel A
—	3	—	Call of the Rockies.....	wes AYC
—	—	5	Call of the South Seas.....	mel A
—	12	1	Candlelight in Algeria.....	war-mel A
1	11	—	Canterville Ghost, The.....	mys-com AYC
—	4	1	Carolina Blues.....	mus-com A

A	B	C		
—	2	8	5	Casanova Brown.....com A
—	—	5	10	Christmas Holiday.....mus-dr A
—	—	5	2	Climax, The.....mus-dr-t A
—	—	3	—	Coastal Command.....war-doc AYC
—	—	4	11	Cobra Woman.....mel-t A
—	—	3	—	Code of the Prairie.....wes A
—	—	2	5	Conspirators, The.....war-mel A
—	—	1	6	Contender, The.....mel AYC
—	—	1	2	Cowboy Canteen.....mus-wes AYC
—	—	5	6	Crime by Night.....cri-mys A
—	—	2	8	Cry of the Werewolf.....cri-mel A
—	11	2	—	Dangerous Journey.....adv A
—	3	4	—	Dark Mountain.....cri-mel A
—	2	1	—	Dark Waters.....cri-mel A
—	6	11	—	Days of Glory.....war-mel A
—	—	8	—	Dead Man's Eyes.....mys-mel A
—	2	3	—	Delinquent Daughters.....cri-mel A
—	1	2	—	Delinquent Parents.....mel A
—	5	3	—	Detective Kitty O'Day.....cri-mys A
—	1	4	—	Dixie Jamboree.....mus-com AYC
3	10	4	—	Double Indemnity.....cri-mel A
—	7	6	—	Doughgirls, The.....com A
6	6	5	—	Dragon Seed.....war-dr A
—	3	2	—	Drifter, The.....wes AYC
—	3	3	—	1812.....war-dr A
—	3	4	—	Enemy of Women.....war-dr A
2	13	4	—	Eve of St. Mark, The.....war-dr A
—	2	3	—	Ever Since Venus.....mus-com AYC
—	2	2	—	Faces in the Fog.....soc-dr A
—	7	3	—	Falcon in Mexico, The.....cri-mys A
—	6	—	—	Follies Girl.....mus-com A
—	4	2	—	Follow the Leader.....cri-com A
—	6	1	—	Forty Thieves.....wes AYC
—	5	2	—	Forty-Eight Hours.....war-mel A
1	9	7	—	Frenchman's Creek.....rom-t A
—	4	1	—	Frontier Outlaws.....wes AYC
—	5	3	—	Gambler's Choice.....cri-mel A
5	11	1	—	Gaslight.....mys-mel A
—	6	8	—	Ghost Catchers.....com AYC
—	3	7	—	Gildersleeve's Ghost.....com A
—	3	6	—	Girl in the Case.....mel AYC
—	3	1	—	Girl Rush.....mus-com A
—	—	5	—	Girl Who Dared, The.....mys-mel A
—	1	8	—	Goin' to Town.....com A
—	3	5	—	Goodnight Sweetheart.....com A
—	4	3	—	Goyescas.....mus-com A
—	4	—	—	Great Mike, The.....dr AYC
—	5	6	—	Great Moment, The.....biog-dr AYC
—	16	4	—	Greenwich Village.....mus-com-t A
—	—	3	—	Gunsmoke Mesa.....mus-wes AYC
—	7	8	—	Gypsy Wildcat.....mus-mel-t AYC
7	9	—	—	Hail The Conquering Hero.....war-com A
—	11	6	—	Hairy Ape, The.....soc-dr A
—	4	8	—	Heavenly Days.....com AYC
—	5	3	—	Henry Aldrich Plays Cupid.....com AYC
—	6	1	—	Henry Aldrich's Little Secret.....com AYC
—	7	1	—	Hey, Rookie.....war-mus-com AYC
—	3	—	—	Hidden Valley Outlaws.....wes AYC
1	7	10	—	Hitler Gang, The.....war-dr-propaganda A
2	13	—	—	Home in Indiana.....com-t AYC
—	6	7	—	I Love a Soldier.....war-com A
—	1	2	—	I'm From Arkansas.....mus-com A
2	11	6	—	Impatient Years, The.....war-com A
—	8	11	—	In Society.....mus-com AYC
—	8	4	—	In the Meantime, Darling.....war-dr A
—	4	6	—	Invisible Man's Revenge, The.....mys-mel A
—	6	—	—	Irish Eyes Are Smiling.....mus-dr-t A
1	9	3	—	Janie.....com A
—	7	4	—	Johnny Doesn't Live Here Any More.....fan A
—	5	6	—	Jungle Woman.....mel A

A	B	C		
—	4	4	Kansas City Kitty	mus-com A
1	12	1	Kismet	fan-t A
—	2	8	Ladies of Washington	war-mel AYC
—	1	2	Laramie Trail, The	wes AYC
—	3	—	Last Horseman, The	wes AYC
—	2	7	Last Ride, The	cri-mel A
1	11	—	Laura	mys-mel A
—	1	5	Law Men	wes AYC
—	1	7	Leave It to the Irish	cri-mel A
—	2	1	Lili Marlene	war-mel A
—	4	—	Lost in a Harem	mus-com AYC
—	2	6	Louisiana Hayride	mus-com AYC
—	1	6	Machine Gun Mamma	mel A
—	3	4	Mademoiselle Fifi	soc-dr A
—	8	3	Maisie Goes to Reno	com A
—	3	9	Make Your Own Bed	com A
1	8	4	Man from Frisco, The	war-dr AYC
—	2	2	Man in Half Moon Street, The	mys-mel A
1	7	3	Marine Raiders	war-dr AYC
—	2	1	Mark of the Whistler, The	mys-mel A
—	3	3	Marked Trails	wes AYC
—	4	9	Marriage is a Private Affair	com A
—	2	1	Marshal of Reno	wes A
—	7	5	Mask of Dimitrios	cri-mel A
—	8	2	Master Race, The	war-dr A
2	2	—	Meet Me in St. Louis	mus-dr-t AYC
—	2	1	Men of the Sea	war-mel AYC
1	16	6	Merry Monahans, The	mus-com A
1	1	2	Ministry of Fear	war-mel A
—	8	1	Minstrel Man	mus-com AYC
2	8	8	Miracle of Morgan's Creek, The	com A
—	3	4	Moonlight and Cactus	mus-wes A
3	8	5	Mr. Skeffington	nov A
—	10	4	Mr. Winkle Goes to War	war-nov AYC
4	8	1	Mrs. Parkington	dr A
—	3	6	Mummy's Ghost, The	mys-mel A
—	8	2	Music in Manhattan	mus-com A
—	3	4	My Buddy	war-mus-dr A
—	8	2	My Pal, Wolf	com AYC
—	3	2	Mystery Man	wes AYC
—	4	3	National Barn Dance	mus-com AYC
—	4	—	Negro Soldier, The	war-doc A
—	6	3	Night of Adventure, A	cri-mel A
—	1	5	None But the Lonely Heart	nov A
—	6	4	Oh, What a Night	cri-mel A
—	14	1	Once Upon a Time	com-fan AYC
—	2	2	One Body Too Many	mys-mel A
—	3	3	One Inch from Victory	war-doc A
—	1	6	One Mysterious Night	cri-mel AYC
2	11	3	Our Hearts Were Young and Gay	com AYC
—	2	4	Outlaw Trail	wes AYC
—	2	4	Outlaws of Santa Fe	wes AYC
—	2	7	Pardon My Rhythm	mus-com AYC
—	9	3	Pearl of Death	cri-mel AYC
—	1	2	People's Avengers	war-doc A
1	10	6	Pin-Up Girl	war-mus-com-t A
—	5	4	Port of Forty Thieves	mys-mel A
1	4	—	Princess and the Pirate, The	adv-t A
—	2	3	Raiders of Red Gap	wes AYC
—	3	—	Raiders of Sunset Pass	wes AYC
—	4	8	Rainbow Island	mel-t A
—	3	3	Rainbow, The	war-dr A
—	5	2	Range Law	wes AYC
—	5	2	Reckless Age	mus-com AYC
—	1	7	Return of the Ape Man	cri-mel A
—	3	—	Riders of Santa Fe	wes AYC
—	4	3	Riding West	mus-wes AYC
—	5	8	Roger Touhy, Gangster	mel A
—	1	2	San Antonio Kid	wes AYC
—	11	3	San Diego, I Love You	com AYC
—	4	2	San Fernando Valley	mus-wes AYC
—	7	2	Scarlet Claw, The	cri-mel A
—	11	3	Secret Command	war-mel A
—	4	3	Secrets of Scotland Yard	war-mys AYC
—	4	6	Sensations of 1945	mus-com A

A	B	C		
—	5	9	Seven Days Ashore	war-mus-com A
—	3	3	Seven Doors to Death	cri-mel A
1	8	4	Seventh Cross	war-mel A
—	3	3	Shadow of Suspicion	cri-com AYC
—	4	3	Shadows in the Night	cri-mel A
—	2	4	Shake Hands with Murder	cri-mel AYC
—	5	4	She's a Soldier, Too	war-com AYC
1	14	3	Show Business	mus-com A
—	4	3	Sign of the Cross (re-issued)	hist-dr A
—	1	3	Silent Partner	cri-mys AYC
—	2	2	Silver City Kid	wes A
5	7	2	Since You Went Away	war-dr AYC
—	3	4	Sing, Neighbor, Sing	mus-com AYC
—	3	5	Singing Sheriff, The	mus-com AYC
—	1	7	Slightly Terrific	mus-com AYC
1	5	—	Song of Nevada	mus-wes AYC
1	8	1	Song of the Open Road	mus-com AYC
—	4	1	Sonora Stagecoach	wes AYC
—	3	5	Soul of a Monster	mys-mel A
—	2	6	South of Dixie	mus-com A
—	2	5	Stars on Parade	mus-com A
—	13	4	Step Lively	mus-com A
—	6	7	Storm over Lisbon	war-mel A
1	9	7	Story of Dr. Wassell, The	war-biog-t A
—	3	1	Strange Affair	mys-com A
—	13	5	Summer Storm	dr A
—	3	2	Sundown Valley	wes AYC
—	11	4	Sweet and Lowdown	mus-com AYC
—	3	3	Swing Hostess	mus-com AYC
—	3	7	Take It Big	mus-com A
—	9	9	Take It or Leave It	com A
2	5	1	Tall in the Saddle	wes AYC
—	5	4	Taxi to Heaven	mus-com AYC
—	5	—	Teen Age	soc-mel A
—	1	6	That's My Baby	mus-com AYC
—	1	3	They Live in Fear	war-dr A
—	6	1	They Met in Moscow	mus-com AYC
1	8	4	This Is the Life	rom AYC
—	9	1	Three Little Sisters	mus-com AYC
—	4	10	Three Men in White	com AYC
—	6	—	Three of a Kind	com A
2	6	1	Thunder Rock	soc-dr A
—	3	2	Thundering Gun Slingers	wes AYC
—	4	9	Till We Meet Again	war-mel A
—	8	1	To Have and Have Not	war-mel A
—	4	1	Tucson Raiders	wes AYC
—	7	—	Twilight on the Prairie	mus-wes AYC
3	14	1	Two Girls and a Sailor	mus-com AYC
—	1	5	Two Soldiers	war-dr A
—	3	6	U-Boat Prisoner	war-mel A
—	10	6	Uncertain Glory	war-mel A
—	4	2	Underground Guerrillas	war-mel A
—	1	2	Unwritten Code	war-mel A
1	14	1	Up in Arms	war-mus-com-t A
—	8	7	Up in Mabel's Room	com A
—	3	2	Valley of Vengeance	wes AYC
—	3	1	Very Thought of You, The	war-com A
—	2	1	Vigilantes Ride, The	mus-wes AYC
—	3	7	Voice in the Wind	war-dr A
—	1	6	Voodoo Man, The	mys-mel A
—	1	6	Waterfront	war-mel A
—	4	6	Wave, a Wac, a Marine, A	com A
—	4	4	Weird Woman	cri-mys A
—	5	1	West of the Rio Grande	wes AYC
—	3	3	Westward Bound	wes AYC
1	1	3	We've Come a Long Way	doc-propaganda AYC
—	7	—	When Strangers Marry	mys-mel A
—	4	1	When the Lights Go On Again	war-dr AYC
—	6	4	Whistler, The	mys-mel A
—	6	8	White Cliffs of Dover	war-dr AYC
10	8	1	Wilson	biog-t A
—	10	2	Wing and a Prayer	war-mel A
3	3	—	Woman in the Window, The	mys-mel A
—	2	1	Wyoming Hurricane	wes AYC
—	9	5	Yellow Canary	war-mys AYC
—	6	2	Yellow Rose of Texas	mus-wes AYC
—	6	5	You Can't Ration Love	mus-com AYC
—	4	9	Youth Runs Wild	soc-dr A

The Consumers' Observation Post

[Continued from page 4]

complete cycle, for a recent issue of a home magazine suggests heating salt in a skillet and pouring it into a rubber hot-water bottle that has outlived its usefulness with water because it has sprung a leak. Not a bad idea, however; but don't heat the salt too hot, or what is left of the hot-water bottle won't last long.

* * *

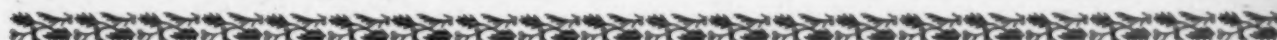
FAT THAT IS BURNED in broiling or frying with too hot a fire usually gives off a pungent, unpleasant odor characteristic of an irritant and toxic substance known as acrolein. It has been suggested by some researchers that this substance might be one of the causes of tumors and cancers. But overheated meat-fat seems to be relatively non-toxic in animal experiments compared with certain vegetable oils in which the chemical changes that take place are of a more serious nature.

* * *

PRESSING FLANNELS, particularly boys' shorts and jackets, in the proper fashion is an important factor in keeping their good appearance. The Cleanliness Bureau advises using two press cloths, one of clean cheesecloth laid right right next to the flannel and on top of the cheesecloth a heavier press cloth. Both should be slightly damp. Press, and when the cheesecloth is lifted, its loose mesh will lift the pile of the flannel, giving it more body and better appearance.

* * *

FAULTY DIET may be a predisposing factor in causing rheumatic fever. Over a four-year period of study was made by Dr. Don Carlos Peete of Kansas City, Missouri, of a number of patients seen in clinic and private practice who showed signs of rheumatic fever or rheumatic heart disease. A check of fifty patients, according to a report in the authoritative Journal of the American Medical Association, showed that the average diet of the rheumatic patient was low in foods that contain vitamin A (best sources of which are fish-liver oils, liver, egg yolk, butter, cheese) and vitamin D (best sources of which are fish-liver oils and egg yolk), as well as minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, and iron. The diets of such patients were also noted to be deficient to some extent in proteins and were high to the point of excess in the use of starchy foods and refined sugars.



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MORE GASOLINE FOR CIVILIANS is seen as one result of the ending of the war in Europe by a Standard Oil economist who predicts that some 700 gallons of gas per car should be available thereafter in 1945. As the older cars will probably burn more gasoline per mile of travel, it is expected that post-war gasoline consumption per mile will be heavier than normal.

* * *

MOTHS are an ever-present problem that the average household has to contend with. Science, however, is working at the problem of making woolen garments, blankets, and rugs less tasty to this insect pest. Various fluorine compounds applied as dips or sprays have proved to be effective protectors of clothing, carpets, and upholstery, though not without some risk to the consumer. A more radical approach, however, is being made by three researchers at the Bureau of Standards who are working at experiments to reduce the cystine content of wool fibers. Cystine is one of the amino acids which is particularly important to the well-being of moth larvae. Its elimination would have the effect of making the wool less nourishing to the little worms that gnaw at wool socks, overcoats, and stored blankets.

* * *

COLD PERMANENT WAVES involve the use of a number of chemicals which may on the whole be safe to use but which are not to be considered entirely free from unpleasant effects in specific cases. In recent months medical literature has reported the case of a woman who experienced a mild outbreak of skin irritation about her neck, face, and ears from such a wave. Patch tests indicated that she was allergic to some ingredient of the preliminary lotion. It is perhaps a sound precaution always to have a test curl made before getting a wave of this or any other variety.

* * *

SOCKS WITH CUSHION SOLES are predicted for post-war civilian use that will prevent blisters on the feet of energetic sportsmen such as tennis players and golfers. They are to be made with a terry (turkish towel) weave, like a bath towel. Another development that has come out of work with the Quartermaster Corps for use of the armed services is a rayon and wool fabric in which the reverse side acts as the lining. Put out by William Skinner & Sons under the name Sunbak, it is expected to be used extensively in sports clothing. An overcoat made of such material would, according to the U. S. Testing Company, of Hoboken, N.J., be 11 percent lighter and about 20 percent warmer than the conventional fully lined coat.

Consumers' Research, Inc. Washington, New Jersey

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PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

By Walter F. Grueninger

Please Note: Prices quoted do not include taxes. In the ratings AA indicates highly recommended; A, recommended; B, intermediate; C, not recommended.

TO continue last month's checklist of new and re-issued sets I have praised this year which I should welcome as Christmas gifts:

Three superb vocal sets devoted to religious themes are Gabrieli's Processional and Ceremonial Music, Victor Set 928, \$4.50; Fauré's *Requiem*, Columbia Set 354, \$5.50; Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, Victor Set 974, \$5.50. Outstanding operatic vocal sets include *Metropolitan Revivals*, Victor Set 953, \$10.50; Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, Excerpts from Act III, Columbia Set 550, \$5.50; *An Operatic Recital* by Claudia Muzio, Columbia Set 259, \$4.50.

In the field of light and folk music, I have enjoyed particularly *Oklahoma*, Decca Set 359, \$5; *The Merry Widow*, Decca Set 364, \$5; Operetta Potpourri, Columbia Set MC100, \$2.50; *The Way-faring Stranger*, Asch Set 345, \$3.50; *Welsh Traditional Songs*, Victor Set 965, \$4.50.

Ratings of Phonograph Records

Bach: *Fugue in G Minor* ("The Little G Minor") & *Still: Scherzo*. All American Orchestra under Stokowski. 2 sides, Columbia 11992. \$1. A new coupling. Stokowski has arranged the thrilling *Fugue* from the organ work of Bach. The music overside does not appeal to me. Quiet surfaces.

Interpretation A
Fidelity of Recording A

Cadman: *At Dawning & Guion: Sheep and Goat Walkin' to the Pasture*. Boston Pops Orchestra under Fiedler. 2 sides, Victor 10-1092. 75c. I prefer *At Dawning* as a song but if you do not object to a loud orchestral arrangement, you are likely to enjoy this performance. Overside is a catchy tune in double time. Quiet surfaces.

Interpretation A
Fidelity of Recording A

Dvorák: *In Nature's Realm* (3 sides) & **Suk:** *Polka* (1 side). Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Stock. Victor Set 975. \$2.50. An overture which portrays "the emotions produced by a solitary walk through meadows and woods on a quiet summer afternoon." Symphonic program music presenting the best qualities of Dvorák's art. Overside, a gay dance. Both compositions appear in recordings for the first time. Three quiet surfaces with a noisy odd side.

Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording AA

Mozart: *Marriage of Figaro*—Overture & **Handel:** *The Messiah*—Pastoral Symphony. Beecham conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra and an unnamed orchestra. 2 sides, Columbia 71606. \$1. Beecham's expert reading of the stimulating *Figaro* overture and the single movement *Pastoral Symphony* which depicts the spirit of Christmas Eve are now presented in a new, welcome coupling. Quiet surfaces.

Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording A

VOCAL

Hageman: *Do Not Go, My Love* & **Carpenter:** *The Sleep that Flits on Baby's Eyes*. Bampton (soprano). 2 sides, Victor 10-1118. 75c. Two songs heard occasionally in recital halls. I like the Hageman selection though I have heard it sung more expressively. Poems by Rabindranath Tagore. Quiet surfaces.

Interpretation B
Fidelity of Recording AA

Malotte: *The Lord's Prayer*. Josephine Houston (soprano) & **Debussy:** *Reverie*. Concert Orchestra under Nosco. 2 sides, Hit 1009. 50c. *The Lord's Prayer* receives an adequate performance but is over-monitored. John Charles Thomas does better on Victor 1736. Overside a small orchestra struggles with a composition Tin Pan Alley "adapted" some-time ago. Audible surfaces.

Interpretation B
Fidelity of Recording A

Massenet: Werther—*Pourquoi me réveiller?* & **Rimsky-Korsakoff:** Sadko—*Song of India*. Crooks (tenor). 2 sides, Victor 10-1093. 75c. Richard Crooks is in fine voice in this dramatic aria from Massenet and the more popular, lyric *Song of India*. Quiet surfaces.

Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording AA

Walton: *Belshazzar's Feast*. Noble (baritone), Huddersfield Choral Society, Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Brass Bands under Walton. 10 sides, Victor Set 974. \$5.50. According to their press release, Victor now issues this set "in response to the largest number of requests ever received for a choral work." The release rightly says that the engineers have done a superb job of recording. The composition, which is based on the Psalms and Daniel's Old Testament account of Belshazzar's Feast, blazes with color. Half a dozen organizations have already performed it in this country. The text appears on the second cover. Quiet surfaces. Of its kind, an outstanding set.

Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording A

FOLK AND POPULAR

Authentic Hillbilly Ballads. Red River Dave, Esmeraldy, Dick Thomas (singers). 10 sides, Musicraft Set 60. \$4.25 tax included. (Musicraft Records, 40 West 46 Street, New York 19.) Just a trifle artificial to be considered as authentic as some recordings made in the field but here, at least, the fidelity is commendable. Included are "She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain," "Don't Make Me Go to Bed," "On Top of Old Smokey," "Altoona Freight Wreck," etc. Fair surfaces.

Interpretation A
Fidelity of Recording AA

Blues. Josh White, Jack Dupree, Sonny Terry, Nora Lee King, Mary Lou Williams, Cisco Houston, Woody Guthrie (singers and instrumentalists). 6 sides, Asch Set 550. \$5. A selection of blues and other numbers by performers who, in many cases, are popular in New York City nightspots. In the high noon light of a music room, some of the performers sound strangely ineffectual, particularly from the vocal viewpoint. Included are "Careless Love," "T.B. Blues," "Until My Baby Comes Home," etc. The best side offers "Lonesome Train," a harmonica description by Sonny Terry of a far-away train, disc 550-3. Satisfactory surfaces.

Interpretation B
Fidelity of Recording A

Crosby Classics. Bing Crosby (baritone). 10 sides, Columbia Set 555. \$3. A re-issue of ten songs recorded about 1930, shortly after Crosby left the Whiteman Rhythm Boys. Included are "Please," "Some of These Days," "How Deep Is the Ocean," "Home On The Range," "The Last Round-up," etc. In those days Bing's voice was lighter in texture, higher in pitch, his style less distinctive, and recording technique was not so far advanced. Quiet surfaces.

Interpretation A
Fidelity of Recording B

Folklore Songs of South America. Olga Coelho (soprano and guitarist). 4 sides, Hargail Set MW 700. \$2.50. (Hargail Records, 299 Madison Avenue, New York 17.) An outstanding Brazilian artist gives us eight Brazilian, Spanish, and Inca songs from her vast repertoire. The lack of program notes makes them incomprehensible to most listeners. Her voice sounds thin here whereas it is rich and full in the concert hall. The surface noise is unusually bad.

Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording C



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